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THE

CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES.

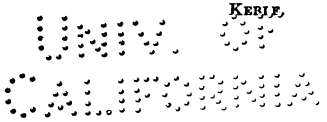
BY THE

RIGHT REV. WM. INGRAHAM KIP, D. D., LL.D.,

BISHOP OF CALIFORNIA.

"Within these walls each fluttering guest
Is gently lured to one safe nest—
Without, 'tis moaning and unrest."

KEBLE.



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THE RIGHT REV. JOSEPH P. B. WILMER, D. D., LL. D.,

BISHOP OF LOUISIANA,

THE AUTHOR

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBES THIS VOLUME,

IN REMEMBRANCE OF

THEIR EARLY STUDENT DAYS.

229502

PRAYER OF THE ORIENTAL CHURCH.

"Grant, my Lord, that the ears which have heard the voice of Thy songs, may never hear the words of clamor and dispute; that the eyes which have seen Thy great love, may also behold Thy blessed hope; that the tongues which have sung the *Sanctus*, may also speak the truth; that the feet which have walked in the church, may tread the region of light; that the bodies which have tasted Thy living Body, may be restored to newness of life."

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PREFACE.

In this little volume the writer has endeavored to give a picture of the Church of the Apostles in the days of its purity, in some cases following it down until its brightness was dimmed by the errors and superstitions of Mediæval times. Taking the brief description of St. Luke, he has attempted to fill up the outline, so as to enable those now living to realize how the men of that day believed and acted. The four points brought forward, he thinks, will cover much of the ground necessary for ordinary readers to know with regard to the Primitive Church.

Each of these articles might have been expanded into a volume, and, indeed, has furnished the text for many learned works in the past; but the writer's wish has been to present these subjects in a popular shape, to inform those who have neither time nor taste to enter deeply into theological discussions. He has therefore avoided controversies—like that on the Eucharist—which seemed to come naturally in his way, and which

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have for centuries awakened the bitterness of polemical disputants. His object has been to make these articles more historical than theological.

In discussing the Council of Nice, he has acknowledged, in several places, his indebtedness to the Very Rev. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, D. D., Dean of Westminster. His work on "The Eastern Church" can have no rival for picturesque effect, as the author had advantages possessed by no other writer on this subject. He had himself visited these scenes of Eastern Ecclesiastical History, and, uniting the descriptions of the tourist with the narrative of the historian, he has been enabled to impart an interest to his pages which nothing else could have given them.

The writer has, however, carefully studied the works of Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, the original sources of the history of that Era in the Church; but he found that the Dean of Westminster had already selected every salient point from these old chroniclers to weave the narrative for his own fascinating pages. When, therefore, the writer may sometimes seem to be following in the steps of Dr. Stanley, and drawing his facts from him, he is in reality quoting from the original authorities, the study of which was common to them both.

The materials for a picture of the Early Church, even slight as that presented by the following pages,

are scattered widely through the works of those centuries. They exist, too, in most varied forms. After leaving the sure record of Inspiration, which closes its history of the Church in suffering and persecution, we come to the narratives of Eusebius of Cæsarea, and the other historians of that day whom we have mentioned above. Then, in some cases, facts and points of doctrine have to be gleaned from sermons, and homilies, and controversial writings, or they are spread before us in the glowing eloquence of St. Cyprian, as he sends his Epistles from the Church at Carthage. And so, here and there, we gather up the story of the early faith, until the review of this era ends, perhaps, in St. Augustine's "City of God," as he calls up the history of the past, and sends forth his shout of triumph over the fall of the "Eternal City" by the hands of the half-civilized Goths. When the crash startled the nations in terror, their ancient reverence for Rome as the Mistress of the world prepared them to unite in her solemn requiem; but to St. Augustine she was only the "Mystical Babylon," and the fiery African recorded his loud gratulation that her power over the Church had passed away forever.

There could not, indeed, have been selected a subject which afforded less opportunity for originality than an attempt to portray the Church of the early centuries. Since first the Christian Church became "a pres-

ence and a power" in the world, countless writers, for various and often widely-different objects, have been gleaning the field, and all that now can be attempted by any one is to select the facts, and so arrange them as to answer whatever purpose he may have in view. The explorer of the present day is "last of all, as one that gathereth after the grape-gatherers."[1]

As the drama of this world is drawing to its close, while the coming of our Lord seems to be delayed, the scoffing spirit of the times is heard with greater boldness questioning the solemn verities of our faith. But, at the same time, the earnest and inquiring are asking with deeper interest, Where is that Church which was constituted "the pillar and ground of the truth?" It is to answer this question that this volume is partly intended, that men may see for themselves how our Lord and His apostles originally organized His Church, and then, as they look on the conflicts which are wasting the strength of so many who "profess and call themselves Christians," they may recognize in the One Apostolic Church, in its different branches, the lineaments of that likeness which has come down to us, still existing through all the intervening centuries.

The writer has endeavored not to make a mere detail of history, but to point out the practical lessons taught by these events. As his readers follow the nar-

[1] Ecclus. xxxiii. 16.

rative of the progress of the faith "through the ages all along," he would have them imbibe something of the spirit of those who then, even at the cost of life, gave form and impress to the Church, and endeavor, in this waning period of the world—"this setting part of Time"—to revive in their own hearts the lofty devotion of those who, in far by-gone centuries, first chanted the anthems and uttered the prayers which are now our precious inheritance.

San Francisco, *May*, 1877.

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I.

CREEDS.

"Who goeth in the way that Christ hath gone,
Is much more sure to meet with Him, than one
That traveleth by-ways."

GEORGE HERBERT.

I.

CREEDS.

It was a declaration of one of the patriarchs of the olden time: "Inquire, I pray thee, of the former age and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers (for we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days on earth are a shadow). Shall not they teach thee and tell thee and utter words out of their heart?" [1]

And in this sentence he reveals but a natural impulse of the human mind. We are tempted ever to turn from the harshness of present realities to the distant past. We indulge in fond regrets for all that time has swept away, and gaze with longing eyes upon the landscape which lies far behind us, because it is clothed in a mellow light and rests there in dimness and silence. The tones of the living fall upon our ears with a harsh reality, and we look back with regret to the dead of ages past as their voices float gently "down through the corridors of time," and swell about us with solemn melody. We believe that theirs was the happy age which was freed from the evils of this present time.

The feeling, therefore, is a natural one, and seems deeply implanted in the mind of man. It is founded

[1] Job viii. 8.

on the belief that the early history of the human family was one of peace and purity, while, as time advanced, each passing century caused the shadows to darken more deeply over the pathway of our race and the glory which had rested on its birth—

> " . . . . to die away,
> And fade into the light of common day."

The classic poets love, therefore, to dwell on the Golden Age, which they represent as gradually changing till it became the Iron Age in which they lived. There is, too, a strange universality about this tradition. We recognize its existence among all the nations of the East. They all look back to some Elysium in the past, the reality of which is gone, and the remembrance only survives in the legends they have inherited. They turn instinctively to the birthplace of the human race, and the Arab now, as he sits beneath his tent, narrates to his children wild and romantic stories of the early Eden. Even now, he declares, there is a guardian sanctity resting on it; that there the wild beast may not wander, or the wild bird pause in its flight; but the eye of God rests upon it, and the holiness of its early day still guards its hallowed precincts.

The Church has also its Golden Age to which it looks back. It is an age of primitive purity, when the Apostles had just received the commission from their Lord, and were going forth to "inherit the earth." Small, indeed, was the band to which this mighty work was committed, and a single "upper room" was able to contain all who in the Holy City had professed the faith of the despised Nazarene. And against them were ar-

rayed the sacred learning of Judea, as taught by its ancient priesthood; the brilliant philosophy of Athens, where men had bowed to the glorious dreams of Plato and the intellectual teaching of Aristotle; and that wide-spread Oriental system, which could scarcely count its proselytes, as its influence stretched from the shrines of Memphis and Heliopolis, far Eastward over the plains of Asia, till it reached the caverned temples of India.

Yet the faithful were all of one heart and one voice, and therefore the infant Church went forth fearlessly to proclaim its authority over the systems of this world. And so it was that it triumphed, bowing down every false creed before it, infusing a new life into the wasted forms of Eastern thought, and spreading a lofty tone through all the literature of the world, whether its utterance was heard in the Christianized Platonism of Alexandria, or it spoke out in the fantastic musings of the Fathers of the Desert.

"It was a religion of visible self-denial and holiness, that willingly took on itself the sorrows which to the multitude were inevitable, and lightened their sufferings by its own pain and privation. It was not, then, that umbratile thing, that feeble exotic, shut up in churches, parsonages, and parlors; but walked abroad, made the multitude both the receivers, the collectors, and distributors of her bounties; compelled cities to wear her livery, and dared to inherit the earth. She then provided homes and forms of operation for the heroic virtues, for lofty aims and firm resolves, making their torrents flow in the manifold channels of mercy, instead of suffering them to waste the land with a baleful magnificence. She then gave names, and methods, and ancient

sanctions, and solemn order, and venerable holiness, and every quality men love and obey, to the pious bearers of spiritual and temporal aid to the ignorant and poor, as even the many sacred titles, which in the Old World the streets, and gates, and bridges, are still suffered to bear, do testify. She then did so combine and temper these works of benevolence with other holy employments, with frequent daily prayer and oft-heard choral praise, that the social acts of temporal and ghostly relief seemed no separate and adventitious work, no petty craft of artificial goodness, but rather flowing from a something holy, natural, and complete in all its parts. She then had officers and employments for all; that all, however humble in rank, or wealth, or mental culture, might be personally interested in the Church's work. She then could claim her own from every rank, teach all her holy character, make all acknowledge her claims to sacredness and authority." [1]

Such is the picture of the ancient Church; and in this day, when its glory seems to have faded, and its majesty to be blighted by the atmosphere of this working world—when we look about us in vain for the heroism and the earnest convictions which characterized those distant days, when the seamless garment of Christ is rent asunder, and they who bear the Christian name have turned their weapons against each other—should we wish to call up this vision of beauty and to array before us a true representation of the Holy Catholic Church, we are obliged to look back through the clouds and mistiness of centuries that are gone.

In endeavoring, then, to lead our readers to survey

[1] *British Critic*, No. lvi., p. 370.

the Church in the peace and purity of its early day, we would turn to the very fountain-head—to the description which the inspired writer has left of the fold of Christ, as it appeared before it had lost the fervor of its first love, or its early zeal had faded away. He sums up all in a single sentence, "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."[1] Let us look, then, at these different points, as each develops the Church in a new phase. Let us unroll the records of the past, and, taking the history of the Church as pictured by the Ecclesiastical writers of that day, we shall see how well in each particular it merited the commendation of St. Luke. The first point, then, brought before us is, THE STEADFASTNESS OF THE CHURCH IN THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE.

What was that doctrine, and where are we to look for it? At first the Church needed no formal profession of its faith, as was afterward embodied in its Creeds. It was too early for the memory of its Lord's teaching to be lost, while His blood still crimsoned the heights of Calvary, and the earth was yet fragrant with His footsteps. The first teachers, too, were men of simple hearts and no worldly learning; and it was reserved for another age, when philosophy had begun its endeavors to warp the faith to agreement with its own lessons, to witness the perversion of those primary truths on which the first generation rested its hopes. Few and simple, we believe, were at that time the tests of faith, for error had not yet crept into the fold. When the Ethiopian eunuch applied for baptism to

[1] Acts ii. 42.

Philip the deacon, his answer was, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." And when the eunuch had declared, "I believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God," he was admitted by that rite into the Christian Church. This simple profession of faith in the Divinity and Messiahship of our Lord included everything which in that day was necessary. There is, therefore, in this point of view, a philosophical truth in that sentence of Newman's, "Freedom from symbols and articles is abstractly the highest state of Christian communion." [1]

But soon there was evidence of the necessity for a more formal declaration of the Christian faith, as the restless intellect of man began to frame doctrines not in accordance with the teachings of the Apostles. The first inspired teachers left behind them no complete system of Christian doctrine. The Epistles we now have were addressed to persons already instructed, already put in charge of the sacred deposit of Christian truth, before they received the Sacrament of Baptism. "It is true, indeed, that they were so directed by the Holy Spirit in writing these apparently casual and unconnected pieces, that no portion of the mass of divinely-revealed truth should lack written proof in confirmation from some part or other of their writings; but that truth is nowhere exhibited entire, nowhere systematically or theologically stated, as in a Creed or a Catechism, nowhere so stated as it was used for purposes of instruction or profession." [2]

But scarcely had these early laborers entered into their

[1] Newman's "Arians of the Fourth Century."

[2] Moberly's "Forty Days," p. 78.

rest, and the Church thus been deprived of the power of reference to men who had seen their Lord in the flesh, when those who survived them felt the need of something more. As the Church, too, extended into heathen lands, it became of essential importance that the leading points of Christian doctrine they were to receive should be placed before them compressed into a small compass.[1] Experience soon demonstrated how useless it was to bring before the minds of the uncultivated and the barbarous vague or indefinite views of the faith. It was a necessity, therefore, in dealing with the heathen tribes with whom they were soon brought into contact, that the great verities of Christianity should be inculcated in brief and emphatic propositions, which the mind could grasp and the memory retain. The teachers of the faith began, therefore, to state the great outlines of the Apostles' teaching—the doctrines they had received from them—and these they required to be professed by all who came forward to baptism.

Thus arose what is called the Apostles' Creed—that form which now, at the distance of eighteen centuries from its origin, is repeated each time we assemble for the worship of God. Though probably not composed by the Apostles themselves, yet it was acknowledged in the Church throughout the world to contain a general summary of all the great and fundamental truths they taught.

We cannot but mark its perfect simplicity—how it deals with nothing but the primary doctrines of our faith. This characteristic alone would be sufficient to show the age in which it had its origin. According to

[1] Milman's "History of Christianity," ii., 115.

the summary of it given in the Church Catechism, it teaches the great facts of "God the Father, who hath made us and all the world; God the Son, who hath redeemed us and all mankind; God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth us and all the people of God." It is evidently not intended—like the later Creeds—to guard against any particular errors. It is therefore the most ancient and the simplest expansion of the doctrines of our Lord as they were handed down in the profession made at baptism. "Just outside of the Canon of actual Scripture, and not claiming a literal inspiration like that of actual Scripture, it is nevertheless the earliest historical record of the systematic doctrine of the Apostles."[1]

But, were all other proofs of the antiquity of this Creed wanting, we should draw the inference that it had existed in the days of the Apostles, from the fact that we so often meet with its expressions incorporated in the writings of that period. It tinged the religious firmament, and, in treating of the faith, its early defenders seemed insensibly to adopt the phraseology of the Creed as expressions with which they were familiar.

When St. Paul is charging St. Timothy to "hold fast *the form of sound words* which he had heard," he must have been alluding to some well-known formulary of doctrine which had been delivered to them. And what more probable than that it should have been this earliest Creed, which must have been widely spread even at that day? And so, in writing to the Corinth-

[1] Moberly's "Forty Days," p. 79. *See* King's "History of the Apostles' Creed," and Bingham's "Orig. Eccles.," b. xi., chap. vii., sec. 8.

ians, in enforcing the doctrine of the resurrection, he seems to be quoting from the Creed which he had previously taught them. "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures."[1]

And, if we pass beyond the Canon of Holy Scriptures to the writings of men in the next generation, we find the most evident use of the language of the Creed. So it was with St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who was a disciple of St. John. In writing to the Trallians, at the close of the first century, he says: "Turn a deaf ear to any man who departs, in what he says, from Jesus Christ, who was of the seed of David and born of Mary; who truly was born, did eat, and did drink; truly was persecuted under Pontius Pilate; truly was crucified and died, being seen of them that are in Heaven, of them that are on earth, and of them that are under the earth; who truly also was raised from the dead, His Father raising Him; in the likeness whereto we also who believe in Him shall His Father raise up through Jesus Christ, without whom we have no real life."[2]

So, again, Justin Martyr, in the year 140, in his "Apology for Christianity," in describing the rite of Baptism, uses this language: "We lead them to a place where there is water, and there they are regenerated in the same manner as we also were; for they are then washed in that water in the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour, Jesus

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 3. [2] "Records of the Church" (Oxford), No. V.

Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. . . . He who is so illuminated is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate; and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who, by the prophets, foretold all things concerning Jesus." [1]

The fullest adoption, however, of the words of the Creed, is that shown by Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, in France, who died in the year 202. In the formulary which he set forth, he says: "The Church, although extended through the whole world, even unto the end of the earth, has received from the Apostles and their disciples the belief in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; and in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was made flesh for our salvation; and in the Holy Ghost, who, by the prophets, proclaimed the merciful dispensation, and the coming, and the birth from a Virgin, and the Passion, and the Resurrection, and the Ascension into heaven, in our flesh, of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His appearing from heaven in the glory of the Father, to gather together all things in one, and to raise from the dead all flesh of human kind; that to Christ Jesus, our Lord and God and Saviour, and King, according to the good pleasure of the Invisible Father, every knee may bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue may confess Him, and that He may recompense just judgment upon all, sending into everlasting fire wicked spirits and angels that transgressed and became apostates, and irreligious, unjust, lawless, and profane men, but upon the just and holy,

[1] Justin Martyr's "Second Apology."

who have kept His commandments and persevere in His love, whether serving Him from the first or turning by repentance, may bestow immortality by the free gift of life, and secure for them everlasting glory." [1]

These are the words of the disciple of Polycarp, who had known the Apostle John. But, one remove from the Apostles, he bears his witness to the Catholic faith, such as the Church holds to this day.

Three centuries rolled by, during which the Christian Church had no need of any other profession of its doctrines. And we see the reason why Creeds and Confessions of faith during that period were short and simple. "While there were no heretics, there was no need to guard against heresy. Antidotes are only given to persons who have taken poison, or who are likely to take it. Neither do we use precautions against contagion when no disease is to be caught. The case, however, is altered when the air has become infected and thousands are dying all around us. It is then necessary to call in the physician, and guard against danger. The case was the same with the Church when she saw her children in peril from new and erroneous doctrines. When a member wished to be admitted, it was her duty to examine whether he was infected or not. The former tests were no longer sufficient. Words and phrases which had hitherto borne but one meaning were now found to admit of several; and the Bishops and clergy were too honest to allow a man to say one thing with his tongue while in his heart he meant an-

[1] "Records of the Church" (Oxford), No. XIV.

other. It was thus that Creeds became lengthened and clauses were added to meet the presumptuous speculations of human reason. But the fault was with the heretics, not with the Church. Her great object from the beginning had been unity." [1]

There was something, too, in the changing character of the age which produced this result. It had been an era of self-denial, and devotion, and active labor, when the great truths which it taught were regarded as themes for adoration, not for dispute. At length, when the hand of persecution was withdrawn, men turned to the deeper and more abstruse doctrines of our faith, and made them the points of irreverent inquiry. The East was always the fatal and prolific soil of speculative controversy, and, on this occasion, the question of the Trinity was the one destined to give birth to the element of disunion in the Christian world.

It was caused by the rashness of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, who, preaching in the Church of St. Mark, in the presence of the Presbytery and the rest of his clergy, attempted to explain, with perhaps too philosophical minuteness, that great theological mystery.[2] Arius, one of his priests, thinking that the Bishop was verging into the Sabellian heresy, opposed him with great logical acumen, while, in doing so, he ran into the opposite extreme. He had been the competitor of the Bishop for the Episcopate, and failed by a very few votes. The tradition is, that on the Sunday after this discussion Arius was appointed to preach in St. Mark's, while the Bishop officiated in the Baucalis. The Bishop,

[1] Burton's "History of the Christian Church," p. 428.

[2] Socrates's "Ecclesiastical History," b. i., chap. v.

in his sermon, made no reference to the controversy, while Arius availed himself of the opportunity to give a full exposition of his views. The consequence was a tumult, some of the congregation crying out, "This is not the faith we have received from our fathers;" others, "Out with the second Cerinthus!" "Anathema to the new Basileides!" This commenced the contest.

The view of Arius was, that "there was a time, before the commencement of the ages, when the parent Deity dwelt alone in undeveloped, undivided unity. At this time, immeasurably, incalculably, inconceivably remote, the majestic solitude ceased, the Divine Unity was broken by an act of the Sovereign Will, and the Only-Begotten Son, the Image of the Father, the Vicegerent of all the Divine Power, the intermediate Agent in all the long-subsequent work of creation, *began to be.*"[1] The Arian doctrine was summed up in the single sentence, "There was, when He was not."[2]

At this day, it seems to us like the highest irreverence thus to dissect, as it were, the nature of the Supreme Being, or to endeavor to deprive it of that vagueness which, to the ordinary mind, constitutes its sublimity. The dispute, indeed, owed its existence to that exquisite subtilty of the Greek language which enabled them to draw distinctions which in other tongues could not be expressed; and while for three centuries they had bowed with awe before this great truth, looking on it only as a fact to be received with the most profound reverence, it was now to be subjected to what a writer calls "the anatomical precision of philosophic Greek."

[1] "Milman's History," vol. ii., p. 68.

[2] Theodoret gives Arius's letter in full, lib. i., chap. v.

It is strange that this metaphysical question, so entirely abstract, which had no relation to anything which concerned man's spiritual interests, but referred only to "the ineffable relations of the Godhead before the remotest beginning of time," should have awakened an excitement which stirred up the most violent passions to their highest exercise. "Beginning in the Schools of Alexandria, the dispute," says Socrates, "ran throughout all Egypt, Libya, and the Upper Thebes, and at length diffused itself over the rest of the provinces and cities." [1] It became the absorbing topic of the day, enlisting all classes of the people.[2] It excited popular tumults, leading to conflicts in the streets and in the amphitheatre, which it required the utmost exertions of the military authorities to quell. The subject was parodied in the theatres by the pagans, who rejoiced to exhibit the manner in which the Christians "loved one another." Verses composed by Arius, and setting forth the disputed doctrine, were sung by all classes through the whole East. Perhaps nothing so much shocked every feeling of reverence in the orthodox mind as these doggerel pieces which were called "Thalia." The most sacred mysteries of our faith were ridiculed in language which had previously been used in the lowest ballads, and appropriated to subjects of disgraceful im-

[1] Socrates's "History," chap. vi.

[2] "You know what a hair-splitting, logicizing, philosophical set the citizens are—how they hold a logomachy dearer than anything else; and the seed sown by Arius was now bearing most deadly fruit. Merchants, lawyers, officers, seemed as much interested in the question as divines, and the shops of Alexandria were full of debate on the deepest mysteries of religion. Business seemed in abeyance; polemical reasoning took its place."—("The Quay of the Dioscuri," p. 19.)

purity. We give a modern version of some of the most innocent of these stanzas, that our readers may judge of their character:

"A greater set of nonsense
Was surely never heard;
Incredible and silly,
Preposterous, absurd!
Such stuff as is rejected
By very boys at school;
Such mysteries as can only
Be handled by a fool.

"Be men, be men, Egyptians!
Or, rather than such lore,
Turn back again to Apis
And Isis as of yore.
They never, in the old times,
That saw King Pharaoh's court,
Bowed down before the folly
That Catholics support."

At the close of the Council of Nice, the book was burned by authority, and became so rare that Sozomen had never seen it, though he had heard of it.[1]

The dispute seems, indeed, to have excited a perfect popular *furor*. As an historian of the fourth century describes the excitement in Constantinople, so was it through every city of the East: "Every corner, every alley of the city was full of these discussions—the streets, the market-places, the drapers, the money-changers, the victualers. Ask a man, 'How many oboli?' he answers by dogmatizing on generated and ungenerated being. Inquire the price of bread, and you are told, 'The Son is subordinate to the Father.'

[1] Sozomen's "History," i., 22.

Ask if the bath is ready, and you are told, 'The Son arose out of nothing.'" [1]

We might, perhaps, expect some excitement among the versatile, imaginative children of the East, but the strangest feature in the history of this doctrine was its spread through the distant West, among those whose more practical character of thought would have saved them, we should suppose, from such fine-drawn theories. This difference in the mental constitution of the East and the West had been noticed as far back as the days of Aristotle, who speaks of the contrast between "the savage energy and freedom of Europe and the intellectual repose and apathy of Asia." [2] The Orientals were the successors of the Greek Sophists, who in the Garden and the Porch once disputed on the refined theories of Plato, and, now that Philosophy had given place to the doctrines of our Faith, they subjected them to the same intellectual crucible. They cared more for accuracy in the minute tenets of Christianity than for that wide-spread hold upon the world which was the object of the Latin Church. There was a significancy, therefore, in the title assumed by the Eastern Church, "Orthodox," while the West prided itself upon the title of "Catholic."

Egypt and Syria were always the homes of that dreamy repose which was developed into the monastic system of Oriental Christendom, and which, though transplanted into the West, found its most congenial soil in the caves of the Nile, or on the mountain-ranges of Lebanon. The bold energy and commanding action

[1] Greg. Nyss., quoted by Stanley, "Eastern Church," p. 175.

[2] Aristotle, Pol. vii., 7.

of Ambrose and Hildebrand seem the natural results of the atmosphere of the West, but in the Latin Church we look in vain for the passionless musings of the hermit Anthony in the burning desert of the Thebiad, or the lonely devotion of Simeon Stylites on his pillar.

So, too, was it with that prolific brood of heresies—Eutychianism, Nestorianism, and Sabellianism—which for centuries convulsed the East, and in their ever-changing forms called for Council after Council and Synod after Synod, to define their shadowy divergence from orthodoxy. In the West they obtained no footing, and their names were only known through the writings of the Greek controversialists. No Western mind could have originated the disputed points of Oriental metaphysics—"bubbles forming and bursting on every wave of human life." Of the swarm of heretics who flit across the page of history, almost all are from the East. The only distinguished name which comes to us from the West is that of Tertullian, when in his latter days he became a Montanist.

Arianism was the only strange exception to this rule of national character; it spread widely through the West, and, when the torrent of Gothic invasion poured down upon Italy, the Romans found to their surprise that their conquerors were not only nominal Christians like themselves, but had adopted also the heresy of Arius. "These rude nations fell off from the faith of the Church, as from a system too exalted for them, into the impieties of Arianism."[1] St. Augustine, in his "City of God," pays his tribute to the clemency of Alaric and his followers in sparing the Churches dur-

[1] Bowden's "Life of Gregory VII.," vol. i., p. 30.

ing the sack of Rome. "The name of Christ rose swelling above the wild dissonance of the captured city." It was, however, owing to the fact that they shared in the same faith with the conquered Romans. But Ulfilas, the Apostle of the Goths, who first translated the Scriptures into their tongue, was an Arian, and from him they had received their belief.

So was it with Genseric, the conqueror of Africa. The North of Africa bowed to this heresy, and even from the Churches of Carthage, built in memory of St. Cyprian, the orthodox were expelled by the Vandal King Honoricus, and the Arians put in possession. Nor were they recovered until nearly a century had passed, and Belisarius took Carthage and drove the Vandals out of Africa. The fierce Lombards, too, shared in that heresy, as did Theodoric the Great, King of Italy; and it is not saying too much to state that the strongest hold of Arianism was in Spain and Southern France. At one time, indeed, the greater part of the Western world acknowledged that belief.

But, in thus narrating the triumphs of Arianism in Western Europe and Northern Africa, we have anticipated its history in the following century. We return, therefore, to its origin.

The anathemas of the Church at once expelled Arius from its fold, because, in the language of that document, "he had dared to utter his blasphemies against the Divine Redeemer." But his doctrines, as we have shown, lived and found a congenial atmosphere through the East, until at length an appeal was made to the Emperor to heal the wounds of the divided Church. He attempted the work, but his envoy to Egypt, Hosius

of Cordova, the most eminent of the Spanish Bishops, met with no success, though he bore a letter from the Emperor, entreating them to "cease vain contentions about words, and to return to the harmony which became their common faith." [1]

But Constantine was a late convert from Paganism, and the first Christian Emperor found himself unable to settle the disputes of the fold to which he had joined himself. We may believe, too, from his own expressions, that it was with bitter disappointment he found the Christian Church rent asunder by what to him seemed empty controversies. "You, Alexander," he says in his address to the contending parties, "mooting a subject improper for discussion; you, Arius, rashly giving expression to a view of the matter, such as ought either never to have been conceived, or if, indeed, it had been suggested to your mind, it became you to bury in silence." And then he makes the appeal to them: "Return again to a state of reconciliation, and by so doing give back to me tranquil days and nights free from care. If this should not be effected, I must necessarily groan and be wholly suffused with tears." [2]

But one resource, therefore, remained; and this, for the first time since the birth of Christianity, was adopted. By Imperial mandate, a General Council of the heads of the different Christian communities throughout the Roman Empire was summoned, to establish, on the united authority of assembled Christendom, the true doctrine on these contested points; and to this we

[1] Socrates, lib. i., chap. vii.

[2] Socrates, lib. i., chap. vii. Eusebius gives the whole letter in "Vit. Const.," ii., 68.

owe the second Creed in our Service, which still from this Council bears the name of the NICENE CREED.

It was in the month of May, A. D. 325, that this Great Council met at Nicæa, in Bithynia. There seemed a special wisdom in the choice of place. It was but twenty miles from Nicomedia, which shortly before had been selected as the Capital of the East. Near enough, therefore, for easy access of the Emperor, so that, to use his own words, "he might be at hand as a spectator and participate in what was done," it was not so near that the influence of the Court could overshadow their deliberations. Perhaps the name itself may have had some influence in determining the place. "It is a city," said the Emperor, "fitting for the Synod, called after Victory, 'the City of Victory,' or 'Nicæa.'" [1]

Fifteen centuries have passed away, and still the ancient city of Nicæa stands, a monument of the Great Council, yet how changed from what it once was! Then, high above all other buildings, rose the great dome of the Church of the Eternal Wisdom, and on each side of it were the remains of the old heathen temples of Victory, and Juno, and Apollo, their broken porticoes still beautiful in ruin. But time has swept all these away. At the close of the thirteenth century, on the dismemberment of the Roman Empire, Nicæa fell before the arms of Orchan, the Ottoman leader, and he at once transformed it into a Moslem city. The Church of the Council was turned by him into a mosque, the symbol of Islam was substituted for the mosaic images on its walls, and, amid the rubbish which now marks its site, Orchan's name appears sculptured over

[1] Eusebius, "Vit. Const.," iii., 6.

the doorway. Attached to this mosque, the first Ottoman college was founded. "In this place," says Van Hammer, "where the Bishops had been compelled, on pain of deposition and exile, to renounce their heresy and subscribe the Nicene Formulary, Christian children, destined to recruit the ranks of the Janizaries, were now forced to forswear their faith."

Nature, indeed, is unchanged, and, as the traveler now approaches the ruined city, he sees the same grand features of the landscape which must have arrested the gaze of those who had then gathered from every part of Christendom—above the city, the wooded slopes of the mountains covered by the chestnut-forests; at their base, the Arcanian Lake communicating with the Sea of Marmora; and, in the distance, the classical Olympus, with its snowy peaks looking down on the wide stretch of hill and valley. Around the city still remain the same ancient rectangular walls, which seem the inclosure of a wild and forsaken chase, for within all is ruin and desolation. Prostrate columns and shattered walls, which Nature is covering with her rich verdure, and tangled vines twining over the broken arches, fill the space. No sound of human life is heard, till with toil and labor the centre of the city is reached, and there is Isnîk, a miserable Turkish village, "standing within the walls, which form a circuit of four miles around it."[1] Near it, surrounded by ruined mosques, is the only monument of old Christian times, the deserted Church dedicated to "the repose of the Virgin."[2] Here the Moslem pilgrims search for the tombs of some

[1] Sir Charles Fellows's "Travels in Lycia," p. 83.

[2] Stanley's "Eastern Church," p. 172.

of the heroes of their early history, or the traveler from the West endeavors to trace the faint memorials of the city once so famous in Ecclesiastical History.

Yet that was a scene of stirring life when the first Great Council gathered there. More than three hundred Bishops were present, and presbyters and deacons without number. They came from all parts of the world, from the distant East and the scarcely-known West. John the Persian stood side by side with Theophilus the Goth, from the extreme North. Alexander of Alexandria was there, to aid in allaying the tempest his own rashness had raised; and there, too, was Arius, ready to defend his doctrine. He was marked by his Asiatic dress and the wildness of his appearance, as if he was "in the world, yet not of the world." And face to face with him was Athanasius, then a young deacon, yet showing in that early day the same intellectual force and energy which in after-years made him the Great Defender of the Faith. Probably, notwithstanding his youth, he was the master-mind of the assembly, and in the Iberian convent at Mount Athos is an ancient frescoed picture of the Council, which represents him seated on the ground in his deacon's dress writing out the Creed. Perhaps this painting embodies the idea which was entertained through the East of his share in this great work. The hermit Bishops came from their Egyptian caves to meet the astute logicians from Alexandria and Antioch. Many of them bore the marks of having suffered for the faith, for the days of martyrdom had not long since ceased, and there were those still living who had passed through the great persecution of Diocletian.

"There were among the Bishops," says Socrates, "two of extraordinary celebrity: Paphnutius, Bishop of Upper Thebes; and Spiridon, Bishop of Cyprus." The former had lost an eye in the persecutions, and was esteemed for his wonderful sanctity. The latter was taken from his sheepfold to be made a Bishop, and "on account of his extreme humility he continued to feed his sheep during his prelacy." To both were ascribed the power of working miracles.[1] But the time would fail us to mention even the prominent members of that body. Their names are written in the chronicles of the times, yet they sound strange to us as they come down through the intervening centuries.[2]

Socrates likens the Council to that great multitude which, on the day of Pentecost, listened to the preaching of St. Peter, composed of "devout men of every nation under heaven; except," he says, "that congregation was inferior in this respect, that all present were not ministers of God, whereas in this assembly, besides the Bishops, was an almost incalculable number of presbyters, deacons, and acolyths, attending them."[3]

The historian Eusebius[4] describes the scene, at which he was present, as being himself deeply impressed with

[1] Socrates, lib. i., chap. x. and xi.

[2] It is perhaps a great loss that the Church history of Philostorgius has not been preserved. It was favorable to the Arians, but nothing remains except a few fragments copied in Photius.

[3] Socrates, lib. i., chap. viii.

[4] There were two of the most prominent members of the Council bearing this name. This one, Eusebius the historian, Bishop of Cæsarea, acted with the orthodox party, though he was said to be a semi-Arian. The other Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia, was an Arian, and, as will be seen in the further pages of this narrative, was one of the most active partisans on that side.

its solemnity. At its first meeting the assembly sat in profound silence, while the great officers of state and other dignified persons entered the hall and awaited "in proud and trembling expectation" the appearance of the Emperor of the world in a Christian Council. At length he entered, wearing the Imperial diadem—a light crown of gold, set with rubies and sapphires alternately—and his dress of purple blazing with gold embroidery and precious stones. The whole assembly at once rose to do him honor. He advanced to a low, golden seat prepared for him, but did not take it till a sign of permission had been given by the Bishops. "Such," says Socrates,[1] "was the respect and reverence which the Emperor entertained for these men." On the one side of him sat Hosius of Spain, who had been his legate to Egypt in the vain attempt to settle this difficulty, and on his right was his Eastern favorite, Eusebius of Cæsarea, "the father of ecclesiastical history."

[1] Socrates, "Hist.," lib. i., chap. viii. This was a reverence which the Church in that age always claimed from civil rulers. Gibbon says: "In the Christian Church, which intrusts the service of the altar to a perpetual succession of consecrated ministers, the monarch, whose spiritual rank is less honorable than that of the meanest deacon, was seated below the rails of the sanctuary and confounded with the rest of the faithful multitude. The Emperor might be saluted as the father of his people, but he owed filial duty and reverence to the Fathers of the Church."—("History," chap. xx.)

When the Emperor Theodosius had entered the chancel to present offerings, he remained. St. Ambrose asked him what he wanted, and on his replying that he remained for the purpose of partaking of the Holy Mysteries, he directed the deacon to address him in the following words: "The priests alone, O Emperor, are permitted to enter within the palisades of the altar; all others must not approach it. Retire, then, and remain with the rest of the laity. A purple robe makes Emperors, but not priests."—(Theodoret, lib. v., chap. xviii.)

One of the leading prelates—probably Eusebius—commenced the proceedings with a short address to the Emperor, followed by a hymn to God. Constantine then delivered an exhortation to unity in the Latin language, which was interpreted to the Greek Bishops. It displayed a Christian spirit which it would have been well for them to have imitated. "The moment," he says, "which I shall consider the chief fulfillment of my prayers will be when I see you all joined together in heart and soul, and determining on one peaceful harmony for all, which would well become you who are consecrated to God, to preach to others."[1]

The Council sat for more than two months, and, as we before stated, the Nicene Creed was the result of its solemn deliberations, while the anathema of the Church was pronounced against Arius and his adherents. In the midst of the excitement of their debates, Eusebius proposed a Creed which had "existed before the rise of controversy." It was one which, he subsequently said, in an Epistle to his diocese, when describing the proceedings of the Council, "he had received from the Bishops who were his predecessors, in the rudiments of which he was instructed when he was baptized, and which, both as a presbyter and when placed in the Episcopal office, he had believed and taught."[2] Of this, as an historical fact, there can be no doubt, since all to whom he made the statement in his Diocese of Cæsarea must have been acquainted with the existence of this Creed and able to confirm this assertion. It was adopted with some slight alterations, and, therefore, was almost

[1] Eusebius's "Vit. Const.," iii., 12.

[2] Theodoret, lib. i., chap. xii.

identical with the Nicene Creed as we have received it. It must have been an early formulary of doctrine adopted in the cradle of our faith—the land of Palestine. The Nicene Creed, therefore, has an antiquity far beyond the date of its formal adoption at Nicæa.

The Creed was intended, as we can at once perceive, to guard the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity by all that language can effect. It declares that he is "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father." Three hundred and eighteen Bishops confirmed the Creed by their signatures, and thus was recorded the united voice of the Christian Church.

The Creed is that we still use, except that for the last division, which was afterward added at the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, there originally stood the words: "But those who say that there was a time when He was not, and before His generation He was not, and He was formed out of nothing, or that He was of another essence or hypostasis, or that the Son of God is created, or is changeable, or is mutable, the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes."

Another change is the insertion of the word *filioque* to declare the procession of the Holy Ghost, "from the Father *and the Son*." When this was done, it would be difficult to tell. Its adoption grew up gradually in the West of Europe, but it was certainly not until the eighth century that it received any authoritative indorsement. Creeping into the Creed in this way, it is now, unfortunately, the most serious obstacle to the communion of the Greek Church with our own. They

say, and justly, that it should not have been added without the direction of an Œcumenical Council.

The difficulty of coming to some agreement in the Council arose not from open antagonism of opinion, for this could have been met by argument. It was caused by the dishonest ingenuity of the Arians in professing their willingness to accept the orthodox language, while they secretly gave it a different meaning. In a work of fiction, whose object is to picture the proceedings of those times,[1] there is a most truthful view given of these ceaseless evasions of the adherents of Arius in offering to subscribe to articles of the Creed which, with a mental reservation, they held in a different sense. We will give a scene from this work to illustrate this point.

"It was now wished to draw up a Creed which should serve to express the faith of the Church, and which should yet be accepted—if it might be so—by all the Prelates. The only difficulty was that which concerned the Son of God, to use language which could not be distorted, and which yet, in its declarations, should be simple and short.

"Alexander had been speaking, and he now concluded by proposing that the Council should simply declare the Son of God to be God.

"There was a great shout of applause. 'It is the faith of Peter! It is the faith of Paul! Anathema to him that gainsays!'

"'My brother of Nicomedia,' said the President, 'has

[1] "The Quay of the Dioscuri," London, 1860. Although this account is given in the form of fiction, yet it is entirely based on the statements made by Athanasius, where all these evasions and references to texts are narrated.—("De Decret. Nic.," sec. 19.)

it your approbation that this sacred Council, inspired by the Holy Ghost, should declare the Son to be God?'

"'I would so declare it with pleasure,' said Eusebius; 'but, before I commit myself further, I would, with your Brotherliness's permission, consult with those with whom I usually act.'

"Accordingly, he and several other of the Arian leaders formed a circle toward the left-hand upper corner of the hall, and seemed very eager in debate. Arius, Theonas of Marmarica, and Menophantus of Ephesus, appeared the most emphatic speakers. At the end of about a quarter of an hour, Eusebius of Nicomedia came forward, and the others resumed their seats.

"'We are content,' said he, 'that this should be so expressed in the Creed: "I believe in the Son of God, God Himself."'

"There was great applause, and I really thought that the two parties were coming to an agreement. But Athanasius seemed very ill at ease; he passed behind the golden throne, and spoke hastily to the legates. In another minute Hosius said, 'Have I your Brotherliness's leave to ask Arius a question?'

"'Surely,' replied Eustathius.

"'Arius,' said he, 'do I understand *you* also to affirm that the Son of God is God?'

"'I am ready to swear my belief in it,' replied he.

"'And you would repeat the words as I have repeated them?'

"'Surely—why not? Is it not written in your law, "I said, ye are gods?" If he then called them gods—'

"Eusebius of Cæsarea darted an indignant glance

at Arius. So *this* was what they meant, this the grand truth so carefully to be embodied in the Creed, that, as *they* were called gods, so was the Eternal Word God—*so*, and not otherwise!

"'Out with the Egyptian! Out with the heretic!' was the cry.

"'*This* will not do,' said Hosius; 'in the same sense we may affirm any holy man to be God.'

"'Say,' said Leontius of Cæsarea, 'that He is always God.'

"'I do say so,' replied Arius.

"'Nothing clearer,' cried Menophantus.

"'Does this great and holy Synod adopt that expression?' asked the president.

"'Remembering,' said Arius, 'that it is written, "We which live are always."[1] Our Lord is, as I have expressed it, God; He lives God, therefore He is always God.'

"'I affirm,' said Alexander, 'that He is very God of very God.'

"'I affirm the like,' retorted Eusebius of Nicomedia; 'if He has verily been so made, verily He so is. Why, the majority would be satisfied with nothing less than calling Him consubstantial with the Father.'

"'Let us say so!' cried Athanasius.

"'The Holy Ghost speaks by Athanasius!' was the cry. 'Athanasius a second Peter!' 'Athanasius another Paul!' 'Let us worship the consubstantial!'"

The great point of dispute ultimately turned on an *i* in the word which was used to assert the inherent Divinity of our Lord. The word for which the ortho-

[1] 2 Cor. iv. 11.

dox contended was *homousios* (of the same substance), while that put forward by the Arians was *homoiusios* (of like substance). The former was expressed by the word consubstantial, adopted by the Council, but bitterly opposed by the Arians. It had been unwittingly suggested by the Arians themselves, and caught up and used by the orthodox. In the English version of the Creed it is expressed by the phrase, "Being of one substance with the Father." The tradition always has been that Eusebius of Nicomedia first altered the document by secretly inserting the *i* before he signed it. The scene is thus pictured in the work to which we have before referred:

"On the next morning Constantine, who had in the mean while received warning that if he were not there the session was likely to be a stormy one, was present. At first matters proceeded tranquilly enough. The Creed was produced, read over, and then the signatures were called for. And, for two hours, Metropolitan after Metropolitan, and Bishop after Bishop, came up to the little table of signature, took pen in hand, and affixed his name. The recusants held back to the last.

"There were seventeen. Eusebius of Nicomedia was their spokesman.

"After much disputing, 'I entreat you,' he cried, 'august Emperor, not to drive us to stand at bay. We have done good service to your throne; we have ever prayed for your life and that of your august family; we have labored for the propagation of the true faith; and now, for a word unknown to—unknown to?—rather rejected by, our fathers, we are to be made offenders.'

"Hosius was about to reply, but the Emperor rose. 'This great and œcumenical Synod,' said he, 'has been the mouth; I am but the hand. What it confirms with the sword of the Spirit I will ratify by the carnal weapon. I pronounce no theological judgment, but the Bishop that signs not the symbol is sent into exile.' The resolute manner in which he spoke showed that no entreaties could move him.

"After an hour's weary discussion twelve more signed. And now there were but five dissentients, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognius of Nicæa, Maris of Chalcedon, and Secundus and Theonas of Lybia.

"For some time I thought that these five would have remained firm, but the love of the world was too strong in Eusebius. Just as the Emperor was about to declare the session at an end, he advanced to the table. For a moment his hand was held over the symbol itself, as if he were diligently perusing it; he then signed hastily, and Maris and Theognius followed his example.

"Eusebius had inserted an *i*, thus turning *homousios* into *homoiusios*;[1] as if they could thus cheat the Searcher of hearts. But the guile answered in this world."

It shows the Oriental character of the Council, that, of all the Bishops who signed the Creed, only eight were from the West. The Greek, too, in which it was written it would have been impossible to translate into the Latin or Teutonic languages. The expressions are too subtile to be represented in any other tongue, and the fine-drawn distinctions (like the *i* on which the

[1] As a matter of history, this change is mentioned by Philostorgius, i, 8.

contest turned) with regard to our Lord's union of natures defied the attempts of the Western theologians to explain them in their language. They were obliged, therefore, to coin new forms of speech, Greek in their character, which often were but an approximation to what had been fully set forth in the delicate idioms of the original text. "The West," says Milman, "accepted the Creed, which its narrow and barren vocabulary could hardly express in adequate terms." [1]

There was one point of difference between the contending parties at Nicæa so marked, that it deserves our serious attention. The orthodox Fathers did not reason from their own interpretation of Scripture, or base their arguments upon it. They bore witness to a simple matter of fact, that the doctrine they avowed had been *received* by them from the generations before them, and they knew of no other as ever existing in their respective Churches. On the contrary, the handful of men at the Council who advocated Arianism made no appeal to uninterrupted tradition; they only argued from their own views of Scripture. They might have been included among those to whom Shakespeare refers, who live—

> "As the world were now but to begin,
> *Antiquity forgot, custom not known.*" [2]

The contrast is strikingly referred to in one of the treatises of Athanasius, when he points out to the Arians the fact that they had dated one of their confessions of faith by the consulate of the current year.

[1] "Latin Christianity," i., 59.
[2] "Hamlet," act iv., scene v.

"Having composed," he said, "a creed according to their tastes, they headed it with mention of the Consul, and the month, and the day, as if to suggest to all men of understanding that now, from the time of Constantius, not before, their faith dates its origin. . . . On the other hand, at Nicæa, many as were the framers of the Creed, they ventured nothing such as these three or four men have ventured. They did not care to head it with consulate, month, and day, but said, 'Thus believes the Catholic Church;' nor had they any delay in stating what they believed, in proof that their views were not novel but Apostolical. And what they set down was no discovery of theirs, but the doctrine which was taught by the Apostles." [1]

And this principle on which they acted was not a mere vague and floating opinion. On the contrary, they regarded their interpretation of the doctrine which they embodied in the Creed as one fixed and recognized, formally committed to the guardianship of every Bishop everywhere, and by him made over to his successor. And we know that such a deposit did exist; and such a *traditio* or transmission, with regard to fundamental doctrines, was formally observed in and from the Apostolic age. Each Bishop appointed to watch for the welfare of the Christian Church "marked well her bulwarks, and set up her houses, *that he might tell them that come after.*" [2]

There can be no doubt but that each branch of the Church had its own distinct line of traditionary teaching from the Apostles. It is to this, perhaps, that St.

[1] "De Synod.," 3–5.

[2] Psalm xlviii. 12 (Prayer-Book version).

Jude refers, when he urges the duty of "earnestly contending for the faith which was *once delivered.*" We may believe, then, that the unanimity which prevailed in the Council of Nice was something higher than a mutual sacrifice of differences for the sake of peace. It had more weight than the mere decision of a majority, no matter how large. It was the joint testimony of the many branches of the Church represented by their Bishops as independent witnesses, to the separate existence in each of them, from time immemorial, of the doctrine in which they found they all agreed.[1]

For many reasons the Council of Nice was the most remarkable body which had ever met in the Church. It proclaimed to the world a startling announcement. For three centuries the Church and the Roman Empire had been growing up side by side, engaged in a ceaseless struggle for the direction of the human mind. Here we have the first public and acknowledged confession that the Church had conquered. "The weak things of this world had confounded the strong;" and when at Nicæa the Emperor of all the known world bowed before the spiritual authority of the Council, we may feel that the victory, to achieve which so many had laid down their lives, had been won at last.

During these passing centuries, too, filled as they were with striking incidents in those days of heroic faith and bitter persecution, nothing stands out prominent. In every part of the world to which the Gospel had gone, whether amid the palaces of the Imperial City, on the plains of India, or in the forests of Western Europe, there is the same story: on the one hand,

[1] *British Critic*, vol. xx., p. 192.

the attempt to crush the Faith, and on the other, the sublime endurance of its followers—the ceaseless struggle between the Old World and the New-born Church.

But there is no central point of interest or influence. At Nicæa a new era was inaugurated. For the first time the Church, as it were, emerges from the chaos, and, uniting its voice with that of the Empire, points out the path its followers were to tread in coming centuries. There was a significancy, therefore, in the title it assumed, "The Great and Holy Synod."

And to this day, in the Eastern Church, this Creed retains the power it had when first announced by the mandate of the Roman Emperor. Among the many millions of the Greek Church it is the one bond of faith. "It is still recited in its original tongue by the peasants of Greece; its recitation is still the culminating point of the Service in the Church of Russia. The great bell of the Kremlin Tower sounds during the whole time that its words are chanted. It is repeated aloud in the presence of the assembled people by the Czar at his coronation; it is worked in pearls on the robes of the highest dignitaries of Moscow. The anniversary of the Council is still celebrated on special days. Every article of the Nicene Creed is exhibited, according to the fashion of the Russian Church, in little pictures, and thus familiarized to the popular mind."[1]

And so through the West. Wherever the Church of England is planted—in India and Australia, in Africa, in the isles of the Southern Ocean, and over the wide expanse of this continent—this Creed is incorporated in the Liturgy, and looked upon as the measure of faith. It is

[1] Stanley's "Eastern Church," p. 148.

the tie which, more than anything else, unites us to the distant East—to the Churches of Constantinople and Antioch. The Greek Church has never formally received the Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds as a part of its ritual. The Nicene alone is common to all Christendom. The very place it occupies in the Communion Service, and the direction to recite it before the administration of the Eucharist, is derived from the Greek Church, "to guard that ordinance against Arian intruders." [1] There was, therefore, a prophecy, which fifteen hundred years have verified, in that declaration of Athanasius, "The word of the Lord, which was given in the Œcumenical Council of Nicæa, remaineth forever."

And now, in concluding this sketch, will some of our readers ask, "What was the future history of Arius?" Though condemned by the Council, the evil he had done lived after him. His heresy spread, as we have shown, and had its strongest hold in the West of Europe, where the Gothic tribes had received it from their earliest teachers. And so it continued for nearly two centuries after the adoption of the Creed at Nicæa; nor did it end in France until Clovis, on the field of Vouillé, struck down the power of the Arian Visigoths, and their leader died by his hand. In Spain it was dominant until, in the sixth century, King Recared, in the Cathedral at Toledo, professed his submission to the Catholic Church.[2] Thenceforth Arianism seems to

[1] In the Communion Service of the Church of England it is so prescribed. In the American Church the choice is allowed in the Communion Service between the Nicene and the Apostles' Creeds.

[2] Stanley's "Eastern Church," p. 152.

have lost its vitality, until it gradually ceased to be numbered among the recognized heresies of the day.

But Arius himself had passed the culminating point of his notoriety. For a while he remained in Alexandria, vainly striving to be received once more into communion with the Church by Athanasius, who had succeeded Alexander in his Episcopal office. Thence, about ten years after the Council, by the advice of Eusebius of Nicomedia, he removed to Constantinople. There the influence of his friends was exerted in his behalf with the Emperor, and on his being admitted to an interview, Arius so earnestly avowed his belief in the Catholic faith, "deceitfully imitating," says Theodoret, "the language of the Holy Scriptures," that the scruples of the Emperor were swept away, and he commanded Arius to be received again to the communion of the Church. The words in which he delivered his decision were characterized by an anxiety and earnestness which subsequent events almost elevated to the dignity of prophecy. "Arius," said he, "has well sworn, if his words had no double meaning; otherwise, GOD WILL AVENGE." Unceasing, indeed, were the entreaties of the Bishop Alexander, that the Emperor would not inflict this disgrace upon the Church; but all were without effect, and the day was appointed for his reception, which his friends were to celebrate by a triumphal procession through the streets.

The previous night was passed by the aged Bishop in prayer in the Church of Peace, accompanied by two other Bishops, Hermogenes of Cappadocia and James of Nisibis. There, before the holy doors of the altar, they knelt, while twenty-four priests were kneeling be-

hind them, and the multitude which filled the Church kept a solemn silence, as hour after hour their prayers ascended on high. The night went on, and the morning light stole in, and still Alexander, though fourscore-and-eight years old, kept his vigil, and the ceaseless petition of the aged man was, "If Arius is to be joined to the Church to-morrow dismiss me Thy servant; or cut off Arius, lest, if he enter into communion with Thy Church, heresy enter also!"[1]

The day broke, and over the whole city was heard the music of trumpets, and flutes, and hautboys, as the procession wound around through the streets. From the Emperor's palace it was to make the circuit of the city to the Great Church. On the procession swept, through the long street of St. Irene, till it reached the Great Square and wound around the Porphyry Pillar of Constantine.

Arius, Eusebius, Euzoïus, and other leaders, came almost at the end. The church was nearly reached, and the moment of their triumph was at hand, when Arius complained of sudden illness, and had to be taken into a house near by. Then the procession halted, and a strange hush and silence fell upon the square, until in a few moments the announcement went forth, "Arius is dead!" And so it was. "Immediately," it is written, "he fell down and burst asunder and expired."[2] Thus he died the death of Judas Iscariot.

That night hymns of praise ascended in the Church, and the aged Bishop returned thanks to God that his prayer had been answered, the Church been freed from

[1] Theodoret, lib. i., chap. xiv.
[2] Athanasius, lib. i., p. 670.

its threatened disgrace, and he who so long hindered the truth "had been taken out of the way." "This was not," says Theodoret, "because he rejoiced at the death of Arius—far from it, for all men must die; but it was because his mode of death surpassed the judgment of man."[1] They glorified God, because so evidently "He had visited His people."

A few years later and another Creed was put forth, rather as the amplification and explanation of the Nicene. Probably that refinement of Eastern dialects to which we have before alluded, in many cases allowed the heretical to repeat the Nicene Creed, while mentally they affixed a different meaning to its words. This, therefore, was placed beyond a doubt by the Creed called the Athanasian, which gradually made its way into the Church and became an acknowledged Creed of the West. It is a portion of the Ritual of the Church of England, though not retained in the American Church. For many centuries, through the Middle Ages, it was believed to be the work of Athanasius himself. Even the English Reformers supposed it to be from his hand. But this is disproved by internal evidence. The phraseology is often that which Athanasius would not have used, while the assertion of the Double Procession of the Spirit—"the Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son"—would have been disowned by him, as it has been by the great body of Oriental Christians.

The learned have now united in the belief that this

[1] Theodoret, lib. i., chap. xii.

ancient Hymn, "Quicunque vult," is of a later date. It was probably composed by Hilary,[1] Bishop of Arles, in Gaul, not earlier than the year 426, nor later than the year 430. It was written, therefore, but little more than half a century after the death of Athanasius.[2]

And so it has come down to us in its pristine purity, unmutilated among all the changes and heresies which arose. Martin Luther called it "the bulwark of the Apostles' Creed;" and Calvin, "a sure and fitting interpreter of the Nicene Creed." It bears the name of the great Defender of the Faith, not because it was written by him, but because it is a faithful exposition of the doctrines for which he so bravely contended, when he stood almost alone—what Milton calls "the sole advocate of a discountenanced truth"—when his motto was obliged to be, "Athanasius contra mundum," and (in the striking words of Hooker) "he had no friend but God and death."[3] Hooker, indeed, sums up the history of this Creed in a single sentence: "Both in the East and West Churches it was accepted as a treasure of inestimable price, by as many as had not given up even the very ghost of belief."[4]

Such are the three acknowledged Creeds of the Cath-

[1] The authorship of this Creed has of course been the subject of great dispute among theologians, but the whole question seems to have been exhausted by Waterland, vol. iv., p. 218, "Ed. Van Mildert." His argument in behalf of Hilary, once Abbot of Lerins, afterward Bishop of Arles, seems to be conclusive. In the historical notice of this point we have adopted the argument contained in the Charge of the Archbishop (Beresford) of Armagh in 1874.

[2] According to Socrates, "Eccles. Hist.," lib. iv., chap. xx., this took place in 371, but Jerome states it to be in 373.

[3] "Eccles. Polity," book v., chap. 42. [4] Ibid.

olic Church. Ludolph of Saxony, in his "Life of Christ," says: "There are three symbols: the first of the Apostles, the second of the Nicene Council, the third of St. Athanasius; the first for instruction in the faith, the second for explanation of the faith, the third for defense of the faith." In these, then, the doctrine of the Church is contained. They declare the sum of what we are to believe concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. "Enlarged and unfolded during four centuries, according to the needs of the Church and the various assaults of heresy, these Creeds have been, throughout the history of the Church, her possession, her sum of truth, her sacred deposit."[1] These the early Christians repeated when they met together; these we now profess when we have gathered on each occasion of public worship; these the Church has maintained against her adversaries; these she holds out to her children; and with these she hopes to meet her Lord when He returns to judgment.

Let us look, then, at the reverence with which these Creeds were regarded by the early Church; how "steadfastly" its members "continued in the Apostles' doctrine." They considered an agreement on these points to be fundamental; as essential to the very being of a Christian and his union with the Church. The Creed was called the "Rule of Faith,"[2] because it was the standard and rule by which orthodoxy and heresy were

[1] Moberly's "Forty Days," p. 80.

[2] Bingham's "Orig. Eccles.," lib. x., chap. iii.

known and examined. Its profession was esteemed necessary to the admission of members into the Church of Christ by Baptism. He who deviated from it in any point was regarded as one who had cut himself off and separated from the communion of the Church.

Irenæus called it "the unalterable Canon and Rule of Faith," and adds, in a passage so truly eloquent that we cannot forbear quoting it entire: "This is the message, and this the Faith, which the Church has received, and which, though dispersed throughout the whole world, she sedulously guards, as though she dwelt but in one place, believes as uniformly as though she had but one soul and the same heart, and preaches, teaches, hands down to posterity, as harmoniously as though she had but one mouth.

"True it is, the world's languages are various, but the power of the tradition is one and the same. There is no difference of faith or tradition, whether in the Churches of Germany, or in Spain, or in Gaul, or in the East, or in Egypt, or in Africa, or in the more central parts of the world; but as the sun, God's creature, is one and the same in all the world, so also the preaching of the truth shineth everywhere, and lighteth every one who will come to the knowledge of the truth. Among the rulers of the Church, neither he who is powerful in words speaks other doctrine (for no one can be above his Master), nor does the weak in the word diminish the tradition. For, whereas the faith is one and the same, neither he who has much to say concerning it hath anything over, nor he who speaketh little any lack." [1]

[1] Irenæus, lib. i., chap. iii.

These were what we have referred to as the golden days of the Church; but now, alas!—

> "The world is very evil—
> The times are waxing late."

We have fallen upon "the last days" foretold by the Apostle,[1] when scoffers are found to deny each of these truths in which the early Christians trusted, and what to them were subjects of faith and adoration are now flung from lip to lip with irreverent blasphemy. Yet, as thus we look out on a world rent by conflicting beliefs, where the waves of popular opinion toss wildly about, and unity of doctrine is remembered only as something belonging to far-distant centuries, is it not more necessary than ever that we should cling to these ancient forms, which thus have come down to us sanctioned by the reverence and love of ages? Is it not a blessing that they have been preserved to us, thus to be professed when we gather in God's House, so that if the living minister should teach anything not sanctioned by the faith, the words of the Creed which he is obliged to repeat would at once give in their denial? The members of our Church have, therefore, ever before them the doctrine of the Apostles—the "old paths" are plain in their sight—and in all the essential points of faith he who errs must willfully wander from the truth.

The history of the world, indeed, has demonstrated the necessity for fixed creeds, to embody doctrine and preserve it unimpaired from age to age. Wherever they have been abandoned it seems as if all landmarks

[1] 2 Timothy iii. i.

had been given up, errors have crept in, and their product has been those thousand forms of heresy which now distract the world. The mind of man needs something on which to lean—something to relieve it from the vague and the indefinite—something fixed and certain—and this can only be furnished by these ancient formularies, which have come down to us from "our fathers' days and the old times before them." Dealing only with the essentials of faith, they place before us those things which are necessary to salvation—those which he who abandons, denies the Lord who bought him, and ceases to be a Christian.

And is it not of importance what we believe? Does the Gospel anywhere indorse that false liberality of modern days which would esteem all creeds alike, and make all opinions on religion matters of indifference? No. A Christian disciple is bound to revere and maintain the doctrines of his Divine Master. He belongs to the school of Christ. The truths in which he rests have had their origin in Heaven. They are not speculative refinements, which are matters of fancy, but they constitute the living principles of action in a Christian's heart; and, in proportion to the freeness of their action, they give a coloring to his whole life, and form the character of his future destiny.

If, indeed, we receive but half of the truth, the deficiency to us will be made up by a corresponding half of error.[1] Would we be safe, therefore, we must go to

[1] "Doctrinal errors ever produce corresponding errors in habits of thinking and acting; and the professor of a corrupted theology, strenuous as may be his efforts and pure his desires, in vain attempts to reach the moral exaltation of him to whom it is permitted to make similar

the full extent of all the knowledge which God has seen fit to communicate. We must drink the whole of the cup of salvation which He has so bounteously put into our hands, and not rest satisfied with a taste on the lips, of that which He designs to pervade the whole body with life and vitality. And if the Apostle has solemnly declared that the heathen are inexcusable in neglecting to derive a knowledge of the Godhead from His visible works,[1] how much more inexcusable are they who refuse to learn truly His revealed will, when it is written as with a sunbeam on the pages of His word, and the Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth," is daily teaching them what it was that Apostles believed, and for which confessors and martyrs were willing to endure the fire and the stake! Happy, then, will be the blinded heathen—happy the rejecting Jew—compared with the enlightened Christian, who "continues not steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine!" The truth is with him, but he prizes it not, and with light pouring upon his pathway he treads onward in darkness.

But is not this one of the trials of our probation? In this mingled state we see nothing clearly, but in every case something is left to faith; and thus it is we are to select the truths to which we cleave, and while error in a thousand forms is seeking to entrap us, we are to "prove all things," and then "hold fast to that which is good." Difficult, indeed, would be the task—

efforts under the guidance of a clearer light. In the Papal schools of the Middle Ages we may find devotion, zeal, charity; but we should not look to them for that completeness, that holy consistency of character, which was the ornament of earlier and purer times."—(Bowden's "Life of Gregory VII.," vol. i., p. 12.)

[1] Romans i. 20.

nay, often impossible, were we left to ourselves; but there are voices coming to us from the distant past. They are those formularies which have grown up amid blood and persecution, when holy men were compelled to concentrate all their powers, and give up all their hearts and minds, to that word in whose truth alone they could find rest or happiness. To those, then, let us cling, until the time comes when all doubt is over, and faith gives place to certainty. As the redeemed enter the Paradise of God, the last shadow which darkens their spirit will fade away, and they find themselves in the presence of Him who is "the Father of lights."

And then, too, the Lord Himself shall be the teacher of His Church, and lead His people into all truth. With minds no longer straitened by human infirmity, as centuries go by they will be learning more deeply the lore of Heaven, and be ever acquiring wider views of those doctrines of which the lessons of the Church on earth were but the rudiments and first beginnings.

II.

FELLOWSHIP.

"O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, *they* in glory shine;
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.
And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
Steals on the ear the distant triumph-song,
And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong."

W. W. How.

II.

FELLOWSHIP.

To "continue steadfastly in the Apostles' fellowship" was a necessary consequence of remaining steadfast in their doctrine. Those who revered their teaching and wished to conform to the faith they preached, could not abandon the Unity of the Church. St. Paul had indignantly asked, "Is Christ divided?" And when the Apostles had gone to their rest, and the Church found the necessity of embodying its faith in Creeds, one article which it always held prominently forward was, "I believe in one Holy Catholic Church." Even heretics acknowledged this truth, and when they wandered from the faith, they still clung to the Apostolic ministry. The Arians attempted to form no new Church; and even the schismatic Donatists and Novatians never gave up their claim to be a portion of the Catholic Church.

The early Christians knew no other doctrine; they recognized no other faith. Looking back to the last solemn petitions of their Lord, when He prayed that His followers might be one, as He and the Father were one,[1] they realized that grievous was the sin of him who should break this holy fellowship, and introduce

[1] John xvii. 21.

dissensions into that Church which is to be on earth a type of the Church in Heaven.

The subject, then, of this chapter will be, that FELLOWSHIP WITH THE APOSTLES which was the privilege of the early Christians, and which they have bequeathed to us who are now members of the Catholic Church. It was the privilege of all who, in every period of the world, remained steadfast in the Church which God founded. It was synonymous with membership in the true Visible Church. The view we shall attempt to give will necessarily be historical. Looking back through all ages of the former dispensations, we shall see that everywhere the plan of God was one which, as in the Apostolic days, recognized the Unity of the Church, and that every infringement of this Unity was the result of man's evil passions alone.

The first Church was necessarily the Patriarchal. We behold its worship in the earliest sacrifice which was offered, when, in the morning of the world, Cain and Abel presented their gifts before God. It was seen again when Noah stood with a single family upon Ararat, and there, looking out over a world baptized by the flood, and with the bow of promise stretching over his head, he consecrated it anew by sacrifice to God. In those days there could be no separate and appointed priesthood. The patriarch ministered in holy things to his own family, thus invested with the double title of earthly and spiritual father.

But as the human race extended, and men "went out from the presence of the Lord," it became necessary to confine the Visible Church within narrower limits, to preserve it from influences which led men off to

idolatry. Therefore, Abraham was called to come out from his kindred, and in this world to be the repository of Divine Truth for the benefit of those who should come after. Then the Church of God was restricted to such as had gathered beneath his tent on the plains of Mamre; and while the Syrian shepherds worshiped God in those mighty solitudes where they dwelt, they were often the sole possessors of His truth in the world.

The Church then had its duty to discharge, and we see plainly what it was. It was to preserve unimpaired the doctrine of God's Unity, resisting that tendency which everywhere was leading men to polytheism, as the untutored mind craved some visible symbol of the Deity, and turned, therefore, most naturally to the Hosts of Heaven—to the sun coming forth in his glory and "the moon walking in brightness." This, then, was the charge of the Patriarchal Church, and thus it can be traced down the stream of history in the sacred records. Its unity is always clearly marked, for the inspired historians confined themselves almost entirely to its fortunes as being alone worthy of narration, while occasional and incidental only are the notices of those beyond its pale.

Few and simple, therefore, were the revelations of that early day. To the patriarchs the past teemed not, as it does to us, with countless monuments of God's wondrous doings, which had their influence on the question of man's salvation. Tradition, indeed, told him of the blissful days of Paradise, and of the sorrowful fall which had eclipsed its glory, and made man a wanderer over the earth which his sins had cursed. To them but one single promise lightened up the dark-

ened pathway of the human race, while it spake of a conflict to be waged—a victory to be gained; and a distant Redeemer vaguely shadowed forth, as the one who was to restore to man his lost inheritance.[1] But with us, who read the history of those ages, there is no hesitation as to which were the true people of God. The existence of the One Church is evident.

The time at length came when there was to be a plainer manifestation of the Church. The Jewish Dispensation succeeded the Patriarchal. Then the Church stood forth even more prominently before the world. Its members were cut off from the nations around them, and hedged in by countless rites, so as to create an impassable barrier between them and the impure services of the heathen with whom they were brought in contact. The worshipers then stood upon a higher ground than they did under the former system. Before their eyes was a long series of signal and glorious mercies, and prophecies without number, growing more specific every age, while the very land in which they lived was a testimony and pledge of God's favor.

Then there was a priesthood constituted by God Himself, and, we are told, at the altar none had a right to minister but "he that was called of God, as was Aaron."[2] Then membership in the one Church was a known and acknowledged privilege, and to be cut off from it, to be regarded "as a heathen man," was looked upon with trembling, as a punishment which debarred the offender from all spiritual hopes in this world and the next. The Jew turned with horror from the schismatic Samaritans, and even our Lord declared to the

[1] Gen. iii. 15. [2] Heb. v. 4.

woman of that nation: "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews."[1] There was no doubt in that day with regard to the Unity of the Church. All the true worshipers were "of Israel," and "to them," the Apostle declares, "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises."[2]

Twenty-five centuries passed away, and the Church assumed another form, or rather was developed at last into the fullness of which the former Dispensation gave only the promise and the germ. The Jewish polity had performed its office in preserving the prophecies of the Messiah, and by the array of types and sacrifices familiarizing the world with all those great principles which were to meet their reality on the heights of Calvary. Then came the "fullness of time," and our Lord sent forth His Apostles with authority to found that spiritual Church which was to be His last gift to men. And we have already remarked how earnestly He petitioned in His last prayer that its unity might be preserved. Nowhere, indeed, through the whole of Scripture, is there any intimation given that varying Creeds and differing folds were to meet the requirements of Him who is "not the author of confusion, but peace."[3]

Then the faithful had not only fellowship with God, but also "fellowship one with another." Whether St. Peter preached the Gospel to the Babylonian colony on the Euphrates, or St. Thomas in distant India, or St.

[1] John iv. 22. [2] Rom. ix. 4. [3] 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

Paul in the scarcely-known Britain, everywhere they founded but one Church.

> "From many an ancient river,
> From many a palmy plain"—

in strange tongues prayers went up to Jesus of Nazareth, and professions of faith were made, as the Christians gathered on their Holy Day, yet everywhere the doctrine was the same, and all were bound together in one chain of brotherhood. They were different portions of the same Church, like different branches of the same vine, all tracing upward through the same Apostolic Ministry. "There is one Church," says St. Cyprian, "divided by Christ throughout the whole world into many members, and also one Episcopate diffused through a harmonious multitude of many Bishops."[1] The Christian of Antioch, when he sojourned in Spain or Gaul, found there, too, the Altars of his Church, and united with a free heart in all her worship.[2] This was its out-

[1] Epistle li.

[2] We see this intercommunism everywhere through the Acts. "The Churches of Christ" saluted the faithful of Rome (xvi. 16). The Churches of Asia "saluted" that of Corinth (1 Cor. xvi. 19). "Letters of commendation" are alluded to as being common (2 Cor. iii. 1). The Epistles written to the Corinthians and Laodiceans are directed to be read in both Churches (Col. iv. 15, 16).

At a later day, Eusebius in his "History" (iv., 23) gives many instances of this. The Church of Rome sends aid to that of Corinth. St. Clement, the Bishop of Rome, writes to the Corinthians to exhort them to unity. Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch, and Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, wrote many Epistles to other Churches, as noticed by Eusebius. When Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, came to Rome, the Bishop allowed him to consecrate the Eucharist in his presence, to show their union. And Bingham ("Orig. Eccles.," v., 1, s. 3) shows that the use of commendatory letters was universal. The seventh Canon of the Council of Car-

ward unity—that unity after which the heart of man is always now sighing, which alone presents the Church before the world as it should be, in all its strength, to prosecute its warfare against the powers of evil.

Take any branch of the Apostolic Church, and how striking is the view it gives us, stretching onward from age to age, as it rides over every changing form of government, contends through passing centuries with every kind of idolatry and error, and rises unharmed above the torrents of persecution which sweep around it! As an illustration of this, look at the history of the Great Oriental Church. "Uninterrupted successions of Metropolitans and Bishops stretch themselves to Apostolic times; venerable Liturgies exhibit doctrine unchanged and discipline uncorrupted; the same sacrifice is offered, the same hymns are chanted, by the Eastern Christians of to-day, as those which resounded in the Churches of St. Basil or St. Firmilian. In the glow and splendor of Byzantine glory, in the tempests of the Oriental Middle Ages, in the desolation and tyranny of the Turkish Empire, the testimony of the same immutable Church remains unchanged. Extending herself from the Sea of Okhotsk to the palaces of Venice, from the ice-fields that grind against the Solevetsky Monastery to the burning jungles of Malabar; embracing a thousand languages, and nations, and tongues, but binding them together in the golden link of the same faith; offering the sacrifice in a hundred Liturgies, but offering it to the same God; and with the sames rites fixing her patriarchal thrones in the same cities, as when the

thage, and the forty-first Canon of the Council of Laodicea, render these letters indispensable both for clergy and laity.

Disciples were called Christians first at Antioch, and James, the brother of the Lord, finished his course at Jerusalem, oppressed by the devotees of the false Prophet, as once by the worshipers of false gods—she is now, as she was from the beginning, multiplex in her arrangements, simple in her faith, difficult of comprehension to strangers, easily intelligible to her sons, widely scattered in her branches, hardly beset by her enemies, yet still and evermore what she delights to call herself, One, Only, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. . . .

"For eighteen hundred years this venerable Communion has fought the good fight, and borne about in her body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Since she armed Athanasius against Arius, and sent forth Cyril against Nestorius, unnumbered heresies have assailed her: foes in every shape have surrounded her; without have been fightings, within fears; her existence itself has oftentimes been a very agony; yet the gates of hell have never prevailed against her. Idolatry and Apostasy have attempted her subjugation and confessed her invincible; Kings and Caliphs, Emperors and Sultans, have stood up against her, but the King of Kings and Lord of Lords has been on her side. Sapor and the fire-worshipers were vanquished by the victories of the innumerable Martyrs of Persia; Tiridates and the idolaters of Armenia were overthrown by the miracles of St. Gregory the Illuminator; Abreha and Atrbeha, with their Ethiopic subjects, repented at the preaching of St. Frumentius. . . .

"The Impostor of Mecca poured out his hordes from Arabia, and taught them to look for a type of the cool

shades of Paradise in the shadows of the clashing cimeters. Persia fell before his generals; Abubekr and Omar poured their legions into Syria. Antioch, and Jerusalem, and Aleppo, and Alexandria, bowed themselves before the accursed crescent. The Empire of the Cæsars was vanquished, and limited, and contracted: the spiritual dominion of the Eastern Church stooped not to the victor. Many a noble victory was won for Christ; many a glorious athlete was sent to martyrdom. The Church rode out this storm: as little did she quail before the successive billows of devastation that poured in around her. The Caliphates, Ommiad, Fatimite, and Ayoubite, rose and fell; she, hated, despised, persecuted by all, mocked at their destruction; the Seljukian Sultanate glared, and was extinct like a meteor; the Mongolian hordes filled Asia and half Europe with devastation and dismay; and finally the Turks overwhelmed Constantinople itself, and closed the annals of the Eastern Empire. But the Eastern Church survived: dispirited, persecuted, humbled to the very dust, from generation to generation she handed down the power of the keys and offered the mystic sacrifice. . . . And it may well be, that in the great regeneration of the Church, in the second and more blessed Pentecost, the Œcumenical Throne of the East will bear no small part." [1]

Is it strange, then, that we love to linger on this scene; that in a world rife with contentions, and where the voice of controversy ever strikes upon the ear, we should gladly turn to those glorious exhibitions of the Apostolic Church, as it won its triumphs, which, begin-

[1] Neale's "History of the Holy Eastern Church," Introduction.

ning in the earliest times, have even now not ceased: showing from age to age that unquenchable life which is the result of its divine organization! It mattered not what were the persecutions without, while within they were called by but one name, and answered to but one tribunal. Its unity gifted it with a power which nothing else could have done; and even when, in after-centuries, differences arose between the Latin Church of the West and the Greek Church of the East, yet neither severed itself from the Apostolic Ministry, and their Bishops, as we have seen at Nice, sat together in Council. It was reserved for the last three hundred years to present to the world the picture of a religious community utterly divided, and those who should be members of the same household arrayed against each other under different names.

Such is the view of "fellowship with the Apostles" which history gives us from the earliest times. We turn to the writings of Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, and we find that he, when speaking of the three orders of the Ministry in his day, could assert, "Without these there is no Church."[1] Then fifteen hundred years pass by, during which the organization of the Church is unaltered. Amid the commotions and changes of the Reformation, the learned Hooker could send forth the challenge to those who had renounced the Apostolic Ministry: "We require you to find but one Church upon the face of the whole earth that hath been ordered by your discipline, or hath not been ordered by ours, that is to say, by Episcopal regiment, sithence the time that the blessed Apostles were here

[1] Epistle to Trallians, sec. 3.

conversant."[1] This challenge, given in 1594, has never been answered.

It was in the beginning of the sixteenth century that a religious convulsion, known as the Reformation, shook the world, and parted into many folds those who professed and called themselves Christians. With many on the Continent of Europe who followed Luther or Calvin, the chain of the ministry which bound them to Apostolic times was broken, and a self-constituted authority took its place. Then, division followed division, until the ecclesiastical historian feels as if looking down upon a wild scene over which chaos broods, as he endeavors in vain to record the narrative of its ceaseless changes, unable to explain or even count the ever-varying fantasies.

With our own Church it was not so. Turning away from those who were "emulous of change," the Church of England merely threw off the corruptions which ages had been gathering about it, and clinging to "the treasure of hereditary belief," she retained the succession of the Apostolic Ministry, and altered nothing that was fundamental. Thus she preserved her primitive character, and, while others wandered away into the endless subdivisions of Augsburg and Geneva, she "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' fellowship."

This, then, is the historical view of the subject. We perceive how, through all the centuries which have passed, it was the plan of Providence to present but one Church before the world, and that, when this unity at last was broken, it was but a repetition of the sin of Korah in the wilderness.[2] And now, will the question

[1] Preface to "Eccles. Polity," sec. 4.

[2] Numbers xvi.

be asked by any one, What is the worth of this Unity? It would not be strange if it were, for there are those who, looking over this scene of disorder and conflict, can even rejoice that these things are so, as if competition was a necessary element of the Church of Christ, and our Lord could not accomplish His plans for the renovation of the world but through the weakness and failings of His followers. But we will meet this argument by referring to the Church in early ages, and showing its influence on the world, when it stood forth one single, united body, which all everywhere could recognize, contrasted with the evils which, in these latter days, have gathered about us.

While, then, there was but one Church throughout the world, *it possessed the power of discipline.* We know no better way to illustrate this than by a comparison with the Roman Empire, which then stretched its sway over the whole known world. There were different provinces, and rulers, and languages, yet over all brooded one mighty power, which was felt from the extremity of Western Europe to the confines of India. Whither, then, could the offender flee? For a crime committed in any part of that vast Empire, the world itself furnished no refuge. In Gaul, in Egypt, or in Persia, the grasp of the law was upon him, and the might of Roman justice seemed to possess ubiquity. Should he flee to the uttermost parts of the earth, even there its hand would seize him and its right hand hold him. Wherever he went she claimed him as her citizen, and he was within the reach of her power. He could not, as in this day, flee from the land in which his crime was committed, and then feel that he could

laugh at the arm of justice, for it would be paralyzed were it to stretch beyond the frontier.

And thus it was, in some degree, in the Church. For the heretic or the offender there was no spiritual home in Christendom. When, for instance, excommunicated from the Church of Antioch or Damascus, he could not find admission even into those of Western Europe, where men spoke a different tongue, for without the commendatory letters of his Bishop he could gain no entrance into any other fold. With what powers, then, were the censures of the Church armed, when he who was subjected to them was thrown at once beyond the pale of Christendom, and driven, as it were, into heathenism! For him there was no longer a Gospel or an altar. There were no promises to cheer him during life, no Holy Offices to wait upon his last moments, no consecrated burial to commit his remains to the dust. His only choice was between this One Church which stood before him in all her grandeur, and the total absence of every religious privilege. St. Cyprian, in his day, wrote, not as a matter of controversy, but as an acknowledged truth, "Whoever he may be, and whatever he may be, he who is not in the Church of Christ is not a Christian." [1] And again, "If any one could escape who was outside the Ark of Noah, then he also may escape who is outside of the Church." [2]

A striking instance of this discipline is related by the historian Gibbon. Under the reign of the younger Theodosius, Synesius filled the Episcopal seat of Ptolemais, near the ruins of the ancient Cyrene. The civil ruler was Andronicus, "the monster of Libya, who

[1] Epist. li. [2] Cyprian, on "Unity of the Church."

abused the authority of a venal office, invented new modes of rapine and torture, and aggravated the guilt of oppression by that of sacrilege. After a fruitless attempt to reclaim the haughty magistrate by mild and religious admonition, Synesius proceeds to inflict the last sentence of ecclesiastical justice, which devotes Andronicus, with his associates and their families, to the abhorrence of earth and heaven. The impenitent sinners are deprived of the name and privileges of Christians, of the participation of the sacraments, and of the hope of Paradise. The Bishop exhorts the clergy, the magistrates, and the people, to renounce all society with the enemies of Christ, to exclude them from their houses and tables, and to refuse them the common offices of life and the decent rites of burial. The Church of Ptolemais, obscure and contemptible as she may appear, addresses this declaration to all her sister Churches of the world; and the profane who reject her decrees will be involved in the guilt and punishment of Andronicus and his impious followers." [1]

And this interdict was not in vain. The Christian Church everywhere received it, and Andronicus was obliged in penitence to implore the mercy of the Church and submit to her authority.

It is to this, then, we must ascribe the Church's power of discipline, when years of penitence and self-denial were willingly endured at her command, and the Bishop of Milan could keep even the Emperor Theodosius a suppliant for admission at the Church's door, and not receive him till a long probation had testified to his repentance.[2]

[1] Gibbon's "History," chap. xx.

[2] Theodoret's "Eccl. Hist.," lib. v., chap. 18.

But how could this be done now, when the Church is surrounded by jealous and discordant communities, each ready to welcome a proselyte, while he himself, as he takes refuge in their fold, feels that he still bears the name of Christian, and therefore calms his fears, and derides the censures which should have humbled him into penitence? The discipline of the Church, therefore, is now confined to those who voluntarily remain within her fold.

Again, another consideration was, *the certainty of the faith.* In those ancient days of unity, as the Christian set out in life, he had no doubts as to the faith he should adopt. On the one side was, the world of heathenism—on the other, Christianity was represented by the One Church ever before him, sanctioned by apostles, and martyrs, and confessors, and he had only to remain subject to her teaching. The past arrayed before him a mighty company of the holy dead who had held these doctrines; their graves were about him, and the fragrance of their holiness still lingered in the Church where they had worshiped. He realized, therefore, that he had "come to the spirits of just men made perfect," and he would cleave to the faith which upheld them in their mortal day. He not only felt it would be wronging their sacred memory to abandon the inheritance they had bequeathed to him, but he knew that if he went out from the Church he must become an alien and a stranger. Whither could he go, for she only had the words of eternal life? In the bosom of the Church alone could he realize the calm feeling of home, for she only bore the Christian name. There was nothing, therefore, to distract the mind. The great

principles of the faith were commended to him by the example of the holy saints who had gone, and of the mighty multitude of the living who were gathered into the fold. No discordant voices perplexed him; no siren tones lured him into error; but he passed along through life with the path plainly marked before him. His days glided quietly and soberly on in the infolding arms of his spiritual mother, till at last he went to dwell with his Lord in the perfect bliss of the Church triumphant.

And such, too, were his feelings wherever he wandered over the earth. Touching, indeed, was the illustration given of this by a Venetian traveler in the thirteenth century, when in one of the cities of distant England he met a funeral train: "There was nothing new or strange, or singular, about the burial procession, particularly calculated to excite the attention of Marco Polo. The *De Profundis* of the stoled priest spake the universal language adopted by the most sublime of human compositions, the Liturgy of Western Christendom. Yet, though no objects appeared which could awaken any lively curiosity in the traveler, there was much in their familiarity to excite the sympathy of a wanderer in a foreign land. With an altered tone he said to the friar: 'Saddened is the spirit of the pilgrim, by the dying twilight and the plaining Vesper-bell. But he who braves every danger for himself may feel his heart sink within him when the pageant of triumphant death brings to his mind the thought that those for whom, as he weened, he parted for a little time only, may have been already borne to the sepulchre. Yet there is also a great and enduring comfort

to the traveler in Christendom. However uncouth may be the speech of the races among whom the pilgrim sojourns, however diversified may be the customs of the regions which he visits, let him enter the portal of the Church, or hear, as I do now, the voice of the minister of the Gospel, and he is present with his own, though Alps and oceans may sever them asunder. There is one spot where the pilgrim always finds his home. We are all one people when we come before the Altar of the Lord.'" [1]

In a later age, indeed, until this Unity was broken, the Religious Houses which were scattered through Europe kept alive this feeling of fellowship in the mind of the wanderer from distant lands. "The traveler rose with the Religious men, beneath whose roof he had found shelter for the night; with them he sought, first of all, the House, oftentimes the Altar of God, and joined in the Matin Service of the Western Church. He went forward on his road with prayer and benediction. *Prosperum itur* was the kindly monks' farewell. And from field, and brook, and bush, the salutation still for miles came forth, haunting his ear, *Procedas in pace, in nomine Domini!* A cloud of good wishes accompanied and guarded him from monastery to monastery, while the Courts of Bishops and the cloisters of learned men were opened to him, by the commendatory letters of his native prelates. . . . There were a hundred little needs, interesting the affections and laying hold on the imagination, which we remember, and with fond envy many times recapitulate, satisfied to the full for those who traveled in Christen-

[1] Sir Francis Palgrave's "Merchant and Friar," p. 138.

dom when at unity with itself, but now utterly unsatisfied for modern wanderers, amid the jealous and disjointed Churches. The traveler of those times was sure of a home for Easter or Whitsuntide; the continual haunting of sacred places was, as it were, a safeguard against the fresh shapes and daily-transformed temptations of sin, to which a traveler is exposed; he had holy Houses everywhere, as refuges in times of weariness or pestilence, and a certainty, in case death should intercept him, of a consecrated resting-place among the Christian dead, when he had passed through the narrow gate, aided by the offices and absolutions of the Church." [1]

But how different is now the picture since this Unity has been swept away! How sad the contrast given by a living poet, as he portrays the feelings of an English Churchman visiting Spain!—

"Before the shrine of some blest saint,
While loud the organ peals,
In unsuspecting faith and love
Each Spanish maiden kneels.
Three Sundays now have passed since we
On Spanish land first trod;
And never have I dared to seek
The presence of my God.
My fainting soul in solitude
Seeks for relief in vain:
Blue hills, and glorious bright green things,
Do but augment my pain.
I seem, 'mid sighs and sounds of prayer,
That o'er these mountains swell,
To be—it is a fearful thought—
An outward infidel." [2]

[1] Faber's "Foreign Churches and Peoples," p. 13.
[2] Lord John Manners's "Outcast."

The traveler finds, too, that the general name of Christian is not sufficient to win the confidence of those among whom he sojourns, and the inquirer is forced to listen to a hundred warring Creeds which claim his attention, until he asks in despair: "What is truth?" He knows not which way to turn or on what to rest. Thousands of dissenting voices are around him, and "after the way which they call heresy," he is obliged to "worship the God of his fathers." Thus, life is often passed in a state of uncertainty as to whether or not he has embraced the right, or, what is worse, his judgment becomes warped, and he is enlisted in a warfare against the truth, because he believes it to be falsehood. Deep and lasting is the perversion to his mind from thus imbibing delusion and error; and at last, perhaps, he is led into an involuntary apostasy, by which he inflicts a grave injury upon his moral being. Of how many is this the unfortunate history! How sad the contrast to those earlier days, when the faithful everywhere realized that God had "knit together His elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of His Son Christ our Lord!"

We will look at one more argument in behalf of this Unity—*the impression the Church was thus enabled to make upon the world.* Why is it that the Church, in former ages, did so much more to Christianize the world than it is now doing? It is because then it presented itself before men as one body, and therefore there was unity of action. Now, its efforts are desultory and feeble, when put forth by disjointed and rival communities. Then, there was but one Spirit animating all. Wherever there was an individual who bore

the Christian name, he felt he was no solitary combatant. He was acting in concert with his brethren through the wide world, and the Christians on the Western shore of Europe and on the distant coast of India rejoiced together in every advantage gained by the Cross.

The very spectacle they presented to the heathen was an imposing one. They saw the Christian Church gathered as one body out of all nations, bound together by one spirit, and living in one enduring fellowship. Earthly kingdoms were ever at war, and committed in deadly strife with each other. One was crushed by the weight of a mightier kingdom, and others rent asunder by internal convulsions. But the Church gave to the world the first display of permanence and unity. Mankind stood in need of some common basis, and to furnish this was one Mission of the Church. It presented before them the one choice between Christianity and Paganism. It stood alone amid the countless forms of Idolatry and Schools of Philosophy—"a great visible phenomenon, as one vast, overspreading shadow, cast from the one invisible Mercy-seat, in the shelter of which alone there was salvation for mankind."[1] They had to receive it or reject it as a whole, to be Christians, or have no part or lot in this redemption. If they turned away from it, the solemn explanation given was, "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." So it was the Church passed down the stream of time in all the grandeur of its Unity, claiming the homage of the world, enshrining that One "Name under heaven given among men whereby they must be saved."

[1] Manning on "The Unity of the Church."

We might ask, By whom were the mightiest triumphs of the faith won? Not by these discordant and changing sects, but by the Apostolic Church, which, strong in its divine Unity, went forth to challenge the control of man's spiritual interests. Let us turn, then, for an illustration, to the cradle of our faith, and see how even from the earliest times to the present day, the Church in that region—that Great Oriental Church, so little understood by us—has gone on, fighting hand-to-hand with every opponent, saying to the East, Give up! and to the West, Keep not back!

"Eastward, from the Great School of Edessa, the envoys of Christianity went forth. They pitched their tents in the camps of the wandering Tartar; the Lama of Thibet trembled at their words; they stood in the rice-fields of the Punjaub, and taught the fishermen by the sea of Aral; they struggled through the vast deserts of Mongolia; the memorable inscription of Siganfu attests their victories in China; in India the Zamorin himself respected their spiritual and courted their temporal authority. From the Black Sea to the Caspian, the Monks of Etchmiadzine girded themselves for this holy warfare; they braved alike the Pagan and the Fire-worshiper, the burning suns of Tiflis, and the feverish swamps of Imeritia; they subjugated the border-lands of Europe and Asia, and planted a colony halfway up the Great Ararat.

"Southward, Alexandria sent forth another army of Missionaries. Steering through the trackless deserts by sun and stars, they preached the Gospel as far as the fountains of the Nile, and planted flourishing Churches in Nubia and Abyssinia. Solitary Monks

ventured farther into the kingdom of Satan; through the savage Gallas they passed to Melinda or Zanguebar; others, committing themselves to the merchant-vessels, preached the way of salvation to Cape Guardafui, Socotra, and distant Ceylon. Here the two great armies of Christian warriors met, having embraced a quarter of the then known world in their holy circle.

"Northward, latest but most victoriously, Constantinople sent out her envoys; Constantine convinced Vladimir by the Icon of the last judgment of the 'good to those at the right hand, the woe to those at the left;' the idol Peroun was carried by the Dnieper to the sea; farther and farther the pioneers of the truth pushed their way; Moscow, and Kieff, and Vladimir, owned their Metropolitans; tribes unknown to the ancients received spiritual illumination. Undeterred by Sarmatian forest or Œsticean swamp, the soldiers of the Cross went on conquering and to conquer, till they stood on the barbarous shores of the 'sluggish sea.' Thence their holy chivalry bore them Eastward; overleaping the Ural Mountains, they forced their way into Siberia; slowly and painfully they advanced toward the rising sun, preaching the glad tidings of the Son of Righteousness; at Irkutsk, and Sitka, and Tomsk, after centuries of warfare, they have placed a Vicar of Christ for the feeding of His flock; and thus, on the borders of Chinese Tartary, they hailed the disciples of the early teachers that went forth from Edessa. And, even now, missionary zeal has not abated. On the unknown shores of the Aleutian Islands, a band of faithful priests have sealed with their labors the faith they

taught, and thus have raised the standard of the Eastern Church in the Western World." [1]

How noble this picture, as we see the serried and unbroken ranks of the Apostolic Church going on its course of triumph! But, as a contrast, let us look at a single scene which is often witnessed. The Missionary of the Cross goes to a heathen land, and calls the dwellers there to repentance. But he finds that others also of a different name are preaching there a different Gospel, and the unlettered savage knows not whom to believe. His efforts, therefore, are thwarted by one who is a disciple of the same Master with himself. It was, therefore, the natural answer of an Indian chief, who had listened to the claims of these conflicting Creeds, "First settle among yourselves what is right, and then I will determine whether to receive your religion." The energies of the Christian world are, therefore, divided in fruitless efforts, or, what is worse, their weapons are turned against each other, and thus "the Prince of this World" still triumphs and rejoices over a divided and powerless Church.

But does it seem to any of our readers that we have made of too much importance the subject of Church Unity? So thought not the early Christians; and strange, therefore, in the ears of a modern Churchman would sound the advice which St. Augustine gave the teacher of his day to guide him in instructing those ignorant of Christian doctrine. "If," he says, "the Catechumen be slow of understanding, and have neither hearing nor heart for the sweetness of truth, he must be borne with tenderly, and, after a short and cursory

[1] Neale's "History of the Holy Eastern Church," Introduction, 3, 4.

statement of other points, those things which are chiefly necessary are to be inculcated with much awe—such as *the Unity of the Catholic Church*, the nature of temptation, and of the Christian life, by reason of the judgment to come." [1] Thus it is that this Early Father treats the Unity of the Church as one of the first principles of faith, and, if it sounds strange to us, it is because in our habits of thought we have wandered far from the tone of feeling and belief which prevailed in primitive times.

And St. Cyprian, in his Epistle to Cornelius, the Bishop of Rome, says: "For this, my brother, we especially both labor after, and ought to labor after, to be careful to maintain, as much as we can, the Unity delivered by the Lord, and through His Apostles to us, their successors, and, as far as in us lies, to gather into the Church the dispersed and wandering sheep which the willful faction and heretical temptation of some is separating from their Mother." [2]

But still it is this Unity which links together in holy fellowship those who are separated by far-distant ages. The living have an interest in the past as fully as in the present. The long record of departed saints is the roll of the treasures of the Church, and it is preserved to animate the courage of those who after them shall be called to "fight the good fight."

In that familiar story of the Progress of the Pilgrim to the Celestial City, he tarried for a night by the wayside at "the Palace of which the name was Beautiful." When morning came, they told him "he should not depart till they had shown him the rarities of that place.

[1] St. Augustine, "De Catechis. Rudibus," cap. xiii. [2] Epis. xli.

And first they led him into the study, where they showed him records of the greatest antiquity; in which they showed him the pedigree of the Lord of the Hill, that He was the Son of the Ancient of days. Here also were more fully recorded the acts that He had done, and the names of many hundreds that He had taken into His service, and how He had placed them in such habitations that could neither by length of days nor decays of nature be dissolved. Then they read to him some of the worthy acts that some of His servants had done; as how they had subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

Thus he saw how "God, at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past to our fathers," and, as a member of "the goodly fellowship" of those for whom all these marvels were shown, the Pilgrim was armed with courage to sustain him when he passed through the Valley of Humiliation.

We learn from the memoirs of the sainted Henry Martyn, that, on his voyage to his missionary field in India, when everything which surrounded him was uncongenial, and with no living voice to speak words of comfort or encouragement, he sustained his sinking spirit by reading the records which Milner, in his Church History, has given of those ancient saints, "of whom the world was not worthy." He writes in his Diary: "I love to converse, as it were, with those holy Bishops and Martyrs, with whom I hope, through grace,

to spend a happy Eternity. The example of the Christian Saints in the Early Ages has been a source of sweet reflection to me. The holy love and devout meditations of Augustine and Ambrose I delight to think of. No uninspired sentence ever affected me so much as that of the historian, that to believe, to suffer, and to love, was the primitive taste." [1]

To us, then, this subject bears the lesson that, while rejoicing in the privilege of being members of this fold, we should seek to imbibe more of its spirit, and, amid the distractions of the world without, cleave to the Church which possesses fellowship with the Apostles, lifting up our hearts and voices to God, that peace may once more return to His chosen flock, and the time come when brethren shall no more "fall out by the way." There only can the mind have rest amid the endless tossings of an unquiet generation. There only "in quietness and confidence can be our strength." In her green pastures and by her still waters we shall not need to hew out cisterns for ourselves.[2] And even when the end of our mortal pilgrimage comes, we shall not leave the Church.

> "There is no death; what seems so is transition;
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
> Whose portal we call Death." [3]

The souls of which the Apostle speaks[4] as being "under the altar" are as earnest now for the welfare of the Church as when in life they took part in the war-

[1] "Memoirs of Henry Martyn," p. 127.
[2] Jer. ii. 13. [3] Longfellow. [4] Rev. vi. 9.

fare. More deeply than ever do they feel their union with it as they look forward to the ages that are coming, and anticipate its future glory.

And thus at last the Judgment comes, and the Celestial City opens its golden gates and the righteous meet in one holy fellowship, whose Unity shall never be broken—"the general assembly and Church of the First-born, whose names are written in Heaven."

III.

EUCHARIST.

"Sit down and take thy fill of joy—
At God's right hand a bidden guest;
Drink of the cup that cannot cloy—
Eat of the bread that cannot waste."

Christian Year.

III.

EUCHARIST.

"And they continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread." As we read these words of the Evangelist, our thoughts involuntarily turn back to the institution of this rite—to the last sad night when our Lord was betrayed. In that "upper room" at Jerusalem was gathered a little group, to partake once more of the Passover with their Lord. Within the walls of the Holy City were almost countless thousands who had come up to that Festival, and now in gladness were partaking of the Feast which recalled their deliverance from the iron bondage of Egypt. Yet with the little band of the Disciples it was not so. A shadow seemed to rest upon them. Sorrow had filled their hearts, for their Lord declared He was about to leave them, and what could the scattered sheep do when the Shepherd was taken from them?

Perhaps the one who apparently showed least emotion was our Lord Himself. To Him there was no uncertainty in the future. He knew perfectly what the coming hours were to bring forth. Looking down the vista opening before Him, He saw it terminated by the Cross, and He knew it was not "possible that this cup could pass from Him." He spake, therefore, to His

followers of His approaching fate with a calm and unalterable composure, which must have impressed their hearts with the deepest melancholy. Yet He would not leave them without some memorial of His love, and what more appropriate than symbols which should recall to their minds those terrible sufferings which, though they knew it not, were now close at hand? He takes, therefore, the bread before Him and breaks it, as significant of the breaking of His body, and pours out the wine, to show the shedding of His blood; and as He thus institutes that significant rite—the most hallowed and solemn in the Christian Church—His command is, "This do in remembrance of me."

The Festival closed, and when they had sung the *Hillel*—the Psalm always used on this occasion—the Master went forth to that death which was to be the pledge of the world's redemption. Yet His parting words had been too deeply impressed upon the hearts of His followers to be ever forgotten. As soon, then, as the infant Church had been organized—as soon as they could gather once more into one assembly—when they offered prayers to their newly-risen Lord, they never failed, at the same time, to commemorate His death in this solemn rite. They met—we are always told—"for prayer and the breaking of bread." It is thus that this rite is everywhere mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as if it invariably constituted a part of their Service.[1] Except, however, in one single instance, it is only referred to by allusion in the Scriptures. To the Corinthians the Apostle gives an elaborate discussion of this subject.[2] They had perverted it into a com-

[1] Acts ii. 42, 46; xx. 7.

[2] 1 Cor. xi.

mon feast, and St. Paul, therefore, reproves them, and states its sacred origin and import, and bids them keep it as a holy Festival to the Lord.

Passing, then, from the Sacred Volume, we will turn to the records of Ecclesiastical writers in the next age, that we may see the manner in which they regarded it.

We begin with an account by Justin Martyr, in the second century, of the form in which this rite was then administered, and we quote his own words, that our readers may hear this early Christian, who afterward poured out his blood in martyrdom rather than sacrifice to idols, describe for himself the scene he so often witnessed:

"After baptism," he says, "we lead him who hath expressed his conviction and professed the faith, to the brethren, where they are gathered together, to make common prayers with great earnestness, both for themselves and for him who is now illuminated, and for all others in all places, that having learned the truth, we may be deemed worthy to be found men of godly conversation in our lives, and to keep the commandments, that so we may attain to eternal salvation. When we have finished our prayers we salute one another with a kiss, after which there is brought to the brother who presides bread and a cup of wine mixed with water, and he, having received them, gives praise and glory to the Father of all things, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and gives thanks in many words for that God hath vouchsafed to them these things; and when he hath finished his praises and thanksgivings, all the people who are present express their assent,

saying Amen, which means in the Hebrew tongue, 'So be it.'

"He who presides having given thanks, and the people having expressed their assent, those whom we call 'deacons' give to each of those who are present a portion of the bread which hath been blessed, and of the wine mixed with water, and carry some away for those who are absent; and this food is called by us the Eucharist (thanksgiving), of which no one may partake unless he believes that what we teach is true, and is washed in the Laver, which is appointed for the forgiveness of sins and unto regeneration, and lives in such a manner as Christ commanded.

"For we receive not these elements as common bread or common drink. . . . These solemnities being finished, we afterward continually remind one another of them, and such of us as have possessions assist all those who are in want; and we all associate one with another, and amid all our sufferings we bless the Creator of all things, through His Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

"And on the day which is called Sunday there is an assembly in one place of all who dwell either in towns or in the country, and the lives of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read, as long as the time permits; then, when the reader hath ceased, the head of the congregation delivers a discourse, in which he reminds and exhorts them to the imitation of all these good things. We then all stand up together and offer up prayers; then, as we have already said, when we cease from prayer bread is brought, and wine and water, and our head, in like manner, offers up prayers

and praises with all the earnestness in his power; and the people express their assent by saying 'Amen.' The consecrated elements are then distributed and received by every one, and a portion is sent by the deacons to those who are absent.

"Each of these also who have abundance, and are willing, according to his choice, gives what he thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with him who presides, who succors the fatherless and the widows, and those who are in need from sickness or any other cause; those also who are in bonds, and the strangers who are sojourning among us, and, in a word, takes care of all who are in want.

"We all of us assemble together on Sunday, because it is the first day in which God changed darkness and matter and made the world. On the same day also Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead." [1]

It will be noticed that this explanation of some of the rites of the faith being written for heathen readers, Justin Martyr seems studiously to have avoided ecclesiastical words and titles, which he might have used if writing to his own brethren, by whom they would be understood. We learn, however, from the passage we have quoted, what was the nature of the Service by which in that day this rite was celebrated.

We can imagine the scene, when the faithful in the midst of trials and persecutions had gathered in their assembly, thus in secrecy to eat the bread of life and to mingle the water of life with bitter tears. They had solved the enigma of the grave, and discovered that immortality for which the soul is ever yearning. And

[1] Justin, "Apol.," 2.

now they were sacrificing everything in this world for the sake of that world of which they had so lately heard. As pilgrims they were ready to depart to the farthest confines of the earth, if new realms might be won to their Lord. The fire and the sword were weekly thinning their ranks, and the survivors were in jeopardy every hour, realizing that they were "baptized for the dead," and not knowing when they should be called to seal their profession with their blood. To them, then, each recurrence of this rite must have been invested with a solemnity which they can scarcely realize, whose lot is to dwell in peace by the still waters and in the green pastures.

And now, let us look at the frequency with which the Holy Communion was then received. We have seen, from the allusions in the Acts of the Apostles, and from the account by Justin Martyr, that it was, in that day, always a part of public worship; and so it continued to be after the Apostles' times. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, exhorts the Ephesians to be "diligent in assembling frequently to celebrate the Eucharist[1] and glorify God. For when ye often meet together, ye dissolve the power of Satan, and the harmony of your faith destroys the destruction which he meditates against you."[2]

In the same century Pliny, the Proconsul of Bithynia, who was contemporary with Ignatius, on the confession of some Christians whom he examined, writes home to Rome, that "they were accustomed to meet before it was light, by reason of the persecutions, and

[1] εις ευχαριστιαν.

[2] Ignatius, "Epis. to Ephesians," 13 (Bingham, vi., 906).

there they sang hymns to Christ their God, and bound themselves by a sacrament against the commission of every kind of wickedness." [1]

And one of the Apostolical Canons prescribes, "If any of the faithful come to Church to hear the Scriptures read, and stay not to join in the prayers and receive the Communion, let them be excommunicated as the authors of disorder in the Church." And the next Canon repeats the same with reference particularly to the clergy: "If any Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon, or any other of the clergy, does not communicate when the Oblation is offered, let him show cause why he does not, that if it be a reasonable cause he may be excused; but if he show no cause, let him be excommunicated, as giving scandal to the people and raising suspicion against him that offers." [2]

The Early Fathers, indeed, speak everywhere of the Communion being received on each Lord's-day, as a custom which was universal. So much was this the case, we learn from St. Chrysostom, that Sunday was anciently called "the Day of Bread" (*Dies Panis*), because the breaking of bread was so invariably the custom of Christians on that day.[3]

But it was not on the first day of the week only that this rite was administered. Those were days when religion was not confined to Sundays and Churches, but went with them through the week, influencing men everywhere and at all times. Tertullian says that in his time they not only received the Eucharist on Sundays in their morning assemblies before day, but also

[1] Pliny, lib. x., Epis. 97.

[2] "Can. Apost.," 8 and 9.

[3] Chrysostom, Hom. 5, "De Resur."

at other times, on other days, particularly on the anniversary festivals of the martyrs, and the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost, which were but one continued festival, but also on the Wednesdays and Fridays in every week throughout the year.[1]

He says expressly of those two days, that they were always observed by receiving the Eucharist; for, when some scrupled to receive it on those days, because they were fast-days, and they would thus break their fast, he takes away this objection by telling them that their receiving the Eucharist, so far from breaking their fast, would the more recommend them to God, and by doing this they would perfectly perform both duties together.[2]

St. Basil agrees with Tertullian in making these days not only fast-days, but days of Communion; and in reckoning four days of the week in which they received the Communion, he counts Wednesdays and Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.[3]

In some places, we are informed, they received the Communion every day. "Thus," St. Augustine says, "the Sacrament of His Body, the Church, and its unity, is in some places prepared and taken every day at the Lord's table."[4] In the Church of Carthage this seems to have been the case at a very early day; therefore, St. Cyprian tells us, "He gives this as one sense of that petition in our Lord's Prayer, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' as if it might be understood in the spiritual sense, as well as in the natural, as a petition to be daily fed with the flesh of Christ in the Eucharist, which was the bread of life."[5]

[1] Tertullian, "De Coron. Mil.," chap. 3. [2] Bingham, vi., 908.
[3] Basil, Epis. 219. [4] Bingham, vi., 910. [5] Cyprian, Epis. xxxvi.

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We do not believe, indeed, that this was the general custom of the Church. When this rite was daily administered, it seems to have been in times of persecution, when they were in constant danger of martyrdom. Thus, in another passage, St. Cyprian exhorts "the martyrs to prepare themselves for the fight of persecution, considering that they therefore drink the cup of Christ's blood every day, that they may be able to shed their blood for Christ." And a little after he says, "Therefore, let that hand which has received the body of the Lord embrace the Lord Himself, being afterward to receive the reward of an eternal crown from the Lord in Heaven." And in another place he adds, that "the priests who celebrated the daily sacrifices of God, did also prepare the martyrs to offer themselves as victims and oblations unto God."

These last passages may give an explanation of the frequent Communion customary at some times. We cannot, however, in any way enter into the feelings of those who were then called to wage the Christian warfare; but in that age of martyrdom they felt that they were ever standing on the brink of the Infinite, and the morning sun which rose so fair to their view might cast its declining beams upon their ashes, as the wind wafted them from the stake. The hour of death appeared not to them, as it is too often regarded by us, as seen through the vista of many coming years. It might be just at hand, and therefore they endeavored each day to be cleansed from their sins, and preparation made for their solemn change; therefore, St. Ambrose says, "I ought always to receive that which is shed for the remission of sins, that my sins may always be for-

given me: I that am always sinning ought always to have my medicine at hand, as he that has a wound seeks without delay for a cure." [1]

There was one custom in that early day which showed in a most striking manner the reverence of the Church for that solemn mystery; it was the practice of excluding, even from a sight of its administration, those who were catechumens and not yet prepared to receive it, or those who were unworthy to do so. When they were ready to begin this portion of the Service, the deacon made solemn proclamation: "Ye that cannot communicate, depart. Let no catechumen be present, no hearer, no infidel, no heretical person." [2] And among the homilies of St. Chrysostom, in one imputed to Severianus, Bishop of Gabala, is a passage which shows the part of the Service in which this was done: "Ye have seen the deacons traversing the Church and crying, 'Let no catechumen be present; none of those who may not see the Heavenly Blood shed for remission of sins.' Ye remember after this how the angels from Heaven sing the hymns and praises, saying, 'Holy is the Father, holy is the Son, holy is the Holy Ghost.'" [3] From which it is evident that it was before the *Trisagion*, "Therefore with angels and archangels," etc., and preparatory to the Oblation.

We can imagine that this exclusion must have heightened the reverence of those who were thus debarred. With what veneration must they have thought of those sacred emblems upon which they were not esteemed worthy to look! It was appealing to a known

[1] Ambrose, "De Sacram.," lib. iv., chap. 6.
[2] Bingham, lib. xv., chap. 3. [3] Chrysostom, lib. vi., Hom. 37.

principle of the human mind, which forces it to invest with a higher regard anything which is enveloped in mystery. And St. Augustine tells us that this was done "to inflame their zeal, and make them more earnest and solicitous in hastening to partake of them." It rendered them diligent in their preparation for that hour when they too should be admitted with the faithful to their Master's feast. They realized that until then they were only "Proselytes of the Gate," dwelling in the outer courts of the sanctuary, and their desire was kindled to hear the voice which bade them "Come up hither!" and enabled them to approach the Altar itself.

But what a solemnity must have been impressed upon an assembly of the early Christians when they had gathered for this rite! The world, with its carping doubts and questionings, was excluded. No careless and irreverent spectator looked upon the sacred mysteries, but the faithful and the believing alone, with one heart and one voice, knelt around the Altar. Their very nearness to the time of the solemn sacrifice which they commemorated added to its impressiveness. They were not separated from their Lord by long intervening centuries, and there still lingered in the Church traditions of what He had said and done, and what those had reported who had seen Him in the flesh;[1] and these they repeated to each other when

[1] The only traditional saying of our Lord which has come down to us and is not quoted in the histories of His life, is that given by St. Paul in his address to the elders at Miletus, "Remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx. 35).

gathered in remembrance of Him. No gorgeous ceremonies as yet adorned that rite—no perversions of its primitive meaning had yet crept into the Church; but all partook of it with the same simplicity of spirit which had marked that little band of disciples who had first gathered in an "upper room" in Jerusalem.

As centuries rolled by, there gradually grew up a change of feeling in the Church with regard to this sacrament. At first, as we have shown, it was looked upon with a shadowy vagueness—as an inexplicable mystery, and this was often the very characteristic which so deeply impressed the minds of the participants. It was with a solemn awe that they came forward to receive the sacred symbols of the Crucifixion; it was the central point of the service; but by a transition so gradual that it was almost imperceptible, they imparted new characteristics to the elements, and concentrated upon the Altar that feeling of veneration for the invisible presence of the Lord which the early worshipers felt for the whole Church.[1]

And this seems to have been the natural result of that warmth of Oriental eloquence with which the preachers of the faith endeavored to illustrate this mystery. All that the poetry of religion could inspire in those who dwelt near the cradle of our faith, or the glowing phrases of an Eastern tongue could frame to set forth the dignity of this rite, were lavished upon it. We see this in the bold imagery of St. Chrysostom, when he appeals to his hearers in Constantinople, and uses, as figures of rhetoric, illustrations which he himself never intended to be interpreted by the strict rules

[1] Milman's "Eccles. Hist.," ii., 316.

of argument. Perhaps a couple of passages from one of his homilies may convey an idea of his style to our readers, and enable them to see how dangerous were such glowing pictures when placed before the fervid imagination of Greeks or Asiatics:

"When you see this body before you," says the "golden-mouth" preacher, "say to yourself, *this* is the body which was nailed to the cross, but which death could not confine. It was *this* which the sun beheld fixed to the accursed tree, and instantly veiled his light. It was this that rent the veil, and burst the rocks, and convulsed the earth. Do you wish to comprehend the full extent of its powers? Ask the daughter of affliction, who touched the hem of the garment that encircled it. Ask the sea which bore this body on its surface. Ask Satan himself, 'What has inflicted on thee this incurable wound? What has robbed thee of thy strength? Whence these chains and this captivity?' He will answer, that *this* crucified body is the foe that hath broken his weapons, and hath bruised his head, and hath exposed to shame and defeat the principalities and powers of his kingdom. Ask Death, and say unto him: 'How hast thou been rifled of thy sting, and how hath thy victory been wrested from thee? How is it that thou hast become the laughing-stock of youths and maidens—thou that hast been the terror both of the ungodly and the righteous?' They will both answer by accusing *this* mysterious body of their discomfiture and disgrace; for when this body was crucified, then the dead arose, and the prison of the grave was burst open, and the tenants of the tomb were set free, and the wardens of hell were terror-stricken."

And again, in another place, he speaks of the elements still more strongly: "Behold, I show you, not angels, not archangels, nor the heaven of heavens, but the Master of all these! Behold, the most precious of all things is exposed to your gaze; and, not only so, but you are allowed to touch it and to handle it; nay, not merely to touch it, but actually to feed upon it." [1]

But the evident anxiety to avoid any view of this rite which might lower its dignity, necessarily betrayed them into an opposite extreme. "Their language is frequently such as to identify the hallowed elements with the sacrifice they represented. When speaking with didactic caution, they would indeed carefully separate the symbol from the object signified; but when endeavoring to elevate the devotion of their hearers, they often forgot this watchfulness and discretion, and expressed themselves in terms which, frequently repeated, would naturally familiarize the hearers with the notion that the body of our Saviour was actually and really present in the consecrated bread and wine." [2]

In all ages, indeed, under every form of faith, the mind turned to these elements with an awe produced by a belief in the invisible presence of the Lord, and this the devout, through the whole Church, could not but feel. But this mysterious feeling, realized indeed by the mind, was one which it would have been very difficult to reduce to language. It was something widely different from the acknowledgment of that material and corporeal change which at length began to be asserted. Yet thus it was, that what at first was only the im-

[1] Chrysost., Hom. xxliii., Ed. Benedic.
[2] Le Bas's "Life of Wiclif."

passioned eloquence of the preacher, as years went by, became the customary language of the pulpit, and gradually grew to be the settled doctrine of the Church. It passed even beyond the sanction given by Oriental metaphors, and "that which the earlier Fathers, in their boldest figure, called only a bloodless sacrifice, became at last an actual oblation of the body and blood of Christ." [1]

Thus it was that, from the mere warmth of Oriental imagery, and the perversion of the language of the early writers, there grew up the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, or the corporeal presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament—a doctrine which has now become a point of faith with the Church of Rome, and which forms the greatest barrier which separates us from it. Deeply as we reverence these sacred symbols of our Master's death, we cannot, as they do, bow in worship before them, for we cannot realize that they have been changed into our Incarnate Lord, and therefore in us it would be idolatry.

We have thus given briefly the historical account of this Sacrament, showing its origin—the manner of its administration in that early day—and the changes it underwent, as the superstition of men gradually perverted it, until, instead of a symbol of peace, showing the love and union of our Lord's followers, it has become a theme of contention, dividing those who should be called by the same name, and debated with irreverent warmth by multitudes who might better copy the example of the Early Christians, and meditate and worship in solemn silence.

[1] Milman's "Eccles. Hist.," ii., 316.

It is indeed a sorrowful view thus to trace it down the stream of time—to leave, as it were, the atmosphere of those early days, when all was simplicity and purity of faith—and to pass away from the first followers of our Lord, men who were raised above death, and could defy the darkness of the grave, realizing that what to the world was the ending of every hope, to the Christian was but the opening of eternal blessedness. For each century that we descend, we find a deeper shadow gathering over the Church, and the Sacraments of its early day sharing in the perversion which had affected every part. "The great mysteries of religion were hardened and distorted by a gross and carnal comprehension of them."[1] The converts of primitive times were men with the heroic and unbending faith of martyrs, yet with the meekness of little children. Their hearts were bound together, their hopes centred in the single wish, to obtain an entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. They were cheered and elevated by the sublime doctrines they had lately learned; they had freed their minds from the damps and shadows of the systems from which they had come out; and the air they breathed seemed that of the Celestial City. To them there was a reality in this Sacrament. It awakened memories of Calvary; it bound them to their fellow-Christians; it pointed them forward to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, of which they should one day partake with Him in Heaven.

And then, when centuries of superstition had clouded this rite and perverted it, as we have seen, it was its Primitive meaning that our Church endeavored to revive.

[1] Bourden's "Life of Gregory VII.," v., ii., p. 249.

It has been stripped, therefore, of all the additions which had been gathered about it; and it is presented to us, as it was to the Christians of the first century, a symbol of our Lord's crucifixion, and a means of grace and spiritual strength which He has designed to strengthen His children's hearts, and to keep them in remembrance of Him till He come again.

This rite then connects us in spirit with the myriads of our Lord's followers who have gone before us; with the holy and the just whose names, in ages past, were written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Like the Early Christians, then, let us "continue steadfastly in the breaking of bread." To us everything about the Sacrament of our Lord's death should be consoling. It should not be invested with the gloom with which so many array it. It is not like that Mount about which the thousands of Israel gathered with trembling; the Mount that "burned with fire," whose top was enveloped in "blackness, and darkness, and tempest," and from which issued thunders and voices so terrible, that even good men "exceedingly feared and quaked."[1] This holy ordinance was not designed to be a fiery ordeal, through which none but the sinless could safely pass. It was intended for the edification of the followers of Christ, yea, even of the feeblest. It is to strengthen within them every Christian grace, and to be to them a channel of living power while, like the Magi of old, they are passing through the clouds and darkness of earth to their God at last.

There is, indeed, no mysterious, physical efficacy in the mere act of eating that consecrated bread; and yet,

[1] Heb. xii. 18.

if we come forward with proper feelings, with "honest and good hearts," our spiritual strength will be increased, our Christian views enlarged and purified, and invigorated, and we shall find that for a time we have passed away from the strife and conflict of this lower world, and stand upon the Mount of Transfiguration, where our Lord reveals Himself, and glimpses are granted to us of that world of joy, where we shall eat of the Tree of Life, and drink of those bright waters which flow from the throne of God forever.

And when the dream of this life is over, and hope has given place to full fruition, it is thus that Bunyan describes the reality of the Pilgrim's hopes:

"Now I saw in my dream that they went in at the gate of the Celestial City, and lo! as they entered, they were transfigured; and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. There were also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave them to them—the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honor. Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, 'Enter ye in to the joy of our Lord.'

"I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, 'Blessing and honor, and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

"Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and, behold, the city shone like the sun, the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal.

"There were also of them that had wings, and they

answered one another without intermission, saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord!' And after that they shut up the gates, which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them."

IV.

LITURGIES.

"Though Babel's curse rests on the world forlorn,
And language, clime, and heart asunder rends;
Yet in the unfailing Church, by age unworn,
Thy blessing still is fresh, thou Pentecostal morn!
One soul, one tongue is there; th' Eternal Son
Dwells in her living courts, forever one."

The Cathedral.

IV.

LITURGIES.

With the early Christians, living under the awakening impulse of their new-born hopes, Time was nothing—Eternity was everything. So absorbed were they in the contemplation of a future world, that we find it was necessary for their teachers to recall them to their daily duties, and to inculcate the lesson that this life also had its claims upon them. They felt that they stood in jeopardy every hour, and must "die daily." The sands of the amphitheatre were red with the blood of their slaughtered brethren, and often they were forced to gaze upon the ruddy glare of the martyr's fires, in which so many of their fellow-confessors were wafted up to Heaven. Life with them, therefore, became valueless, because they knew that its light must soon vanish, and be lost in the brighter glory of the coming world. Is it strange, then, that thus nursed in vicissitudes, and beaten by the rough winds of life, they were bold and fervent—men of mailed and impervious fortitude, ready to defy the world, prepared for torments and armed for death?

And whence could they derive this courage but from another world? To it, then, they constantly aspired, and every wish and hope were merged in the

single desire to wage well their warfare here, so that they might win the prize of immortality. To them the gates of Eternity seemed ever open. They listened to the anthems of the blessed, and shrank with trembling from the wailings of the lost. They prayed with an earnestness which brought every sense into unison with the heart-felt petitions rising from the very depths of their souls. They realized the chain which bound them to the throne of the Eternal. It was to them a living reality—and therefore "they continued steadfastly in prayer."

We see from the New Testament record how unceasing was the intercourse of the first Christian converts with the Saviour who had lately parted from them and gone into Heaven; how often they came to that mercy-seat, to which they had just learned their right of access through the sacrifice of their risen Lord. When St. Peter returned to them, miraculously released from prison, it was in the words of prayer and praise that their joy found utterance. In the dungeon Paul and Silas sang praises and raised the voice of prayer, till the astonished prisoners heard them. This became, indeed, the characteristic mark of the Christian —the trait by which he was known—and when, therefore, Saul had turned to the faith, and a vision from God informed Ananias of the change, he is not told directly that the most bitter enemy of the Christians had himself become a convert, but the news is conveyed to him in the announcement, "Behold, he prayeth!"

This characteristic did not expire with the first generation of Christians. We recognize it also as the trait of their successors, and it took long years for faith to

grow dim and zeal to be quenched before the spirit of prayer also failed. As long as persecution continued, and they were obliged, in preaching the Gospel, to confront a dark and lowering world; so long as their testimony was delivered before those who might "turn again and rend them," they felt the impotency of an arm of flesh, and looked only to Heaven for aid and strength.

In some cases their prayers have been preserved to us, caught as they fell from their lips in the hour of suffering and death, and treasured up by their brethren as a precious legacy—the martyr's last bequest to those he left behind, still contending in the struggle of this lower world. Such was the prayer of the martyr Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, as he was bound to the stake. Through almost eighteen centuries it has come down to us, valuable not only for the ardent devotion which breathes through every sentence, but also for its testimony to truths which the impiety of later days has called in question. How earnestly, for instance, does he recognize the divinity of our Lord, when thus he makes his appeal to the Father!—

"Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the knowledge of Thee, God of angels and powers, and of all the creation and of all the generations of the righteous who live in Thy presence, I bless Thee, because Thou hast thought me worthy of this day and this hour, to take part in the number of Thy martyrs, in the cup of Christ, to the resurrection of soul and body in the incorruptible felicity of the Holy Spirit, among whom may I be received this day into Thy presence, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, as Thou hast before or-

dained and hast now fulfilled; Thou, who art the faithful and true God. For this, and for all things, I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, through the Eternal High-Priest Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, through whom be glory to Thee, with Him, in the Holy Spirit, both now and unto all ages to come." [1]

But it is to the more public and stated worship of the Christians in those ages that we would particularly refer. Of the prayers they offered as individuals we can know but little. Then, they were most often alone with God, and when they wrestled with Him in the deep agony of their souls, none but He heard them, and it was left for their Father who seeth in secret to reward them openly. But of their public and common prayers the record has come down to us, preserving even the words in which these ancient Christians enshrined their petitions. We still have the ancient liturgies, which in that day were heard in every church from the plains of India to the shores of Western Europe.

Beginning at the earliest day, we can see by allusions in Scripture, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles, that some system of ritual must have been established in the Churches. We may say it was coeval with the organization of the Church itself. We cannot, of course, expect plain directions on these points, for the Epistles were not written to enforce or prescribe the ritual of religion. All we can expect is, if it existed in the Apostles' days, to find some allusions showing an acquiescence in it. In most cases it must have rested on unwritten directions from the founders of these Churches. When, for instance, St. Paul went

[1] Eusebius, "Eccles. Hist.," lib. iv., chap. 15.

from city to city, and everywhere gathered congregations into the infant Church, he must at the same time have given them some system of worship or ritual. Their very existence depended on their having this to take the place of their old Jewish or heathen rites; and in the next generation these rules rested only on tradition.

We can find, indeed, in St. Paul's writings, illustrations of the fact that there were traditions of Church regulations and customs handed down, which were not prescribed in Scripture, but which they were bound to observe. He writes to the Thessalonians, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and *hold the traditions* which ye have been taught, whether by word or our Epistle."[1] It is on this principle that he settles the question with the Corinthians, that men should wear their hair short, and that women should have their heads covered during divine service. Here is a point on which Scripture gives no direction, but the Apostle begins by implying that it was one of many rules or traditions (παραδοσεις) which he had given then, and which they were bound to observe. "Keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you."[2] The word here translated *ordinances*, in the margin of the English Bibles is rendered *traditions*. In conclusion, he refuses to argue with one who cavils at or rejects this rule. "If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God."

The truth which this opens to us should prevent any surprise on our part at many rites which were in use in the Primitive Church, but which are not mentioned in the New Testament. It was the spirit of that

[1] 2 Thess. ii. 15. [2] 1 Cor. xi. 2.

early day which St. Chrysostom has embodied in a single sentence, "He who is duly strengthened in faith does not go so far as to require argument and reason for what is enjoined, but is satisfied with the *tradition* alone." [1]

There was evidently in that day a wide system of unwritten discipline, the multitude of whose details it was impossible for St. Paul to enumerate in writing to the Corinthians, and he could, therefore, only remind them of his ways while he was among them. He writes, "I praise you that *ye remember me* in all things." These matters could only be inculcated by the voice of the living minister, and, as he could not visit them in person, he sent Timothy in his place, whose special object was to remind them of the Apostle's teaching. He says, "*For this cause* have I sent unto you Timotheus, who shall bring you into remembrance *of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every Church.*"

Tertullian has well illustrated the duty of obedience to tradition, when, referring to some rites, he says: "Though this observance has not been determined by any text of Scripture, yet it is established by custom, which doubtless is derived from Apostolic tradition. For how can a usage ever obtain which has not first been given by tradition? But you say, 'Even though tradition can be produced, still a written (Scripture) authority must be demanded.' Let us examine, then, how far it is true that an Apostolic tradition itself, unless written in Scripture, is inadmissible. Now, I will give up the point at once, if it is not already determined

[1] In 1 Cor., Hom. 26.

by instances of other observances, which are maintained without any Scripture proof, on the mere plea of tradition and the sanction of consequent custom. To begin with baptism. Before we enter the water, we solemnly renounce the devil, his pomp, and his angels, in Church, in the presence of the Bishop. Then we are plunged in the water thrice, and answer certain questions over and above what the Lord has determined in the written Gospel. . . . The Sacrament of the Eucharist, though given by the Lord to all, and at supper-time, yet is celebrated in our meetings before daybreak, and only at the hand of our presiding ministers. . . .

"If you demand a Scripture rule for these and such like observances, we can give you none; all we say to you is that tradition directs, usage sanctions, faith obeys. That reason justifies this tradition, usage, and faith, you will soon yourself see, or will easily learn from others; meanwhile you will do well to believe that there is a law to which obedience is due. . . . These instances are enough to show that a tradition, even though not in Scripture, still binds our conduct if a continuous usage be preserved as the witness of it." [1]

And this is exactly the ground taken by our own Church in the Thirty-nine Articles. In Article XXXIV., "Of the Traditions of the Church," it says, "Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly."

Now, the object of this argument has been to show

[1] Tertullian, "De Coron.," sec. 3.

that there must have been a system of Rites and Services in the Early Church, which claimed the obedience of its members, but did not exist in their written law. If, therefore, we do not find this Ritual plainly developed in Scripture, it is no proof that it did not exist.

There is another consideration. Christians in that day were surrounded by unbelievers, and we may imagine, therefore, that, in their intercourse with each other, they would exercise a prudent caution with regard to their mode of worship. This reserve would be exhibited particularly by their teachers; and the more regular and uniform was the administration of Divine Service in the Infant Church, the less likely would the Apostles treat of it, particularly in their written communications to the Churches.

This reason, indeed, is plainly given by St. Basil: "Of those articles of doctrine and preaching, which are in the custody of the Church, some come to us in Scripture itself, some are conveyed to us by a continuous tradition in mystical depositories. Both have equal claims on our devotion, and are received by all—at least by all who are in any respect Churchmen. For should we attempt to supersede the usages which are not enjoined in Scripture as unimportant, we should do most serious injury to Evangelical truth—nay, reduce it to a bare name.

"To take an obvious instance: Which Apostle has taught us in Scripture to sign believers with the cross? Where does Scripture teach us to turn to the East in prayer? Which of the Saints has left us recorded in Scripture the words of invocation at the consecration of the bread of the Eucharist and of the cup of blessing?

Thus we are not content with what Apostle or Evangelist has left on record, but we add other rites before and after it, as important to the celebration of the Mystery, receiving them from a teaching distinct from Scripture. . . . After the example of Moses, the Apostles and Fathers who modeled the Churches were accustomed to lodge their sacred doctrine in mystic forms, as being secretly and silently conveyed. . . . This is the reason why there is a tradition of observances independent of Scripture, *lest doctrines, being exposed to the world, should be so familiar as to be despised.*" [1]

He adds another reason for the Ritual not being given in Scripture: that the Rites were memorials of doctrines not intended for publication except among baptized Christians, whereas the Scriptures were open to all men. This, at least, is clear, that the Ritual could scarcely have been given in detail in Scripture without imparting to the Gospel the character of a burdensome ceremonial, and withdrawing our attention from its doctrines and precepts.[2]

Again, these Rites must necessarily have been gradual in their growth, until they developed into the full Ritual System of later years. The Christians in their concealment in hidden retreats, where alone they could hold their services, could not be expected to have a perfect system of Ritual. They could only illustrate the simplest points of their faith, and their symbolism—as we now see in the Catacombs at Rome—was confined to these. It may be admitted, therefore, that the construction of a Liturgy by the Apostles was a progressive

[1] St. Basil on "Holy Spirit," sec. 66.

[2] Tracts (Oxford), No. 34.

work. But the New Testament itself was thus formed step by step, for even between the writing of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John fifty years elapsed. We may imagine, too, that the work of Christian *instruction* would naturally so engross the time of the Apostles that much less could be devoted to that of the Liturgy. Such was the case at Troas, where the "breaking of bread"—that is to say, the celebration of the Eucharist—was delayed till midnight, in consequence of the length of the Apostle's preaching, which he resumed again after the celebration of the Mysteries, and continued till daybreak. But as soon as the Christian Church was founded in any city, with the establishment of the Ministry, the external forms received enlargement, and the performance of Divine Service became more solemn.[1]

Thus St. Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, represents that Church as already performing the Service of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, yet he considers it necessary that he should repeat his visit, to arrange all things in a more perfect way. This is the interpretation invariably given by the Fathers to the concluding words of the passage in which he speaks of the Eucharist—"The rest will I set in order when I come." St. Jerome, in his commentary on this passage, refers it to the Eucharist, and St. Augustine, in his Letter to Januarius, more fully says, "These words give us to understand that in the same way as he had, in the course of his Epistle, made allusion to the usages of the Church Catholic (on the matter and essence of the Sacrament), he afterward himself instituted (at

[1] "Institutions Liturgiques," par l'Abbé Guéranger, Paris, 1840.

Corinth) those Rites, the universality of which is unaffected by any difference of manners." [1]

And now, having shown the probability of there being a Ritual, though not specifically set forth in the writings of the Apostles, let us pass on one step further, and show the positive existence of this Liturgy by tracing allusions either in the Scriptures or the early writers which have a reference to the forms, which are substantially those we now use.

We might draw some Scripture sanction from the minuteness of the Jewish Ceremonial, for it would be difficult to affirm that what was once the subject of a Divine command, given with so much particularity, could be at any time unsuited to human nature, or improper for worship. The revelations of Christianity have not changed man's spiritual nature. The very object which all this "pomp and circumstance" was designed to promote *then* is as important with us *now*—that is, the realizing of the greatness and awfulness of God. In fact, it applies with so much more force to us, as the Christian has a more solemn nearness to God, through His Son, than had the Jews.[2] But we have actual intimations in the New Testament of the same principle being continued.

That noble, supplicatory Hymn, to which we have before alluded, in which the first Christians uplifted their voices in praise when St. Peter was miraculously released from prison, proves, by the technical nicety of its construction, that it was an anthem of the Church with which they were well acquainted, and not an effusion of the moment.

[1] Ibid, p. 31.

[2] "British Critic," vol. xxx., p. 444.

In the opening of the Acts of the Apostles, we have the "breaking of bread," and then, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul points out the Liturgical importance of this rite. And even in the first establishment of the Church, how grand was the Service, as we learn from early writers, in which it was celebrated! "We have an altar,"[1] says St. Paul, and at this the rites were administered. Around it were arranged, in accordance with the picture of the celestial worship given by St. John,[2] first, in front, the Apostle or Bishop; on the right and left were the Priests, symbolizing the four-and-twenty elders; and near the altar, the Deacons and other Ministers, suggesting the idea of the Angels who wait, in the attitude of servants, about the Heavenly Throne. This is the picture given by early writers, and this arrangement of the seats is still observed in the Apses of Churches in the East. And if, in the West, this primitive custom has fallen into disuse, the Church of Rome has maintained the tradition in the arrangement of the choir of several of the ancient Churches, and follows it precisely whenever the Pope celebrates, or assists pontifically, in any one of the Patriarchal Basilicas.[3]

The faithful being assembled, the Service began. The celebrant, precisely as he now does, read from the Apostolical Epistles, and recited a portion of the Holy Gospel. This in the early day was the Catechumen's Service, being that portion in which he was permitted to take part. St. Paul says to the Colossians, "When this Epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans," and in writing to

[1] Heb xiii. 10. [2] Rev. iv. [3] Abbé Guéranger.

the Thessalonians he adds, "I charge you by the Lord that this Epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." And we learn that this injunction had the force of law from the first, for, in the latter part of the second century, St. Justin, in his description of the Service, says, "The Epistles of the Apostles are read." As to the reading of the Gospel, Eusebius informs us that the narrative of our Lord's actions, from the pen of St. Mark, was approved by St. Peter, to be "read in all the Churches."

The salutation to the people—"The Lord be with you!"—was one with which all were familiar before Christian times. It was in use under the Ancient Law. With these words Boaz addresses the reapers,[1] and under the new Dispensation it holds its place in all the Liturgies of the East and West.

The Collects, according to St. Augustine, were in all the ancient Liturgies. The conclusion of the prayers—"for ever and ever"—has likewise been used from the remotest antiquity. So, the custom of responding, "Amen," can be traced to the Apostolic Age. St. Paul himself alludes to it in his First Epistle to the Corinthians.[2]

Before the consecration, St. Cyprian tells us, came the Preface. We can trace it back to the very cradle of the Church. Then the Priest gave the Exhortation, "Lift up your hearts!" and the people responded, "We lift them up unto the Lord." Then comes the form of thanksgiving, which St. Cyril, in addressing the Catechumens of Jerusalem, a Church certainly of Apostolic foundation, explains to them, "Gratias agamus

[1] Ruth iv. 4. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 16.

Domino Deo nostro! Dignum et justum est." (We give thanks unto the Lord our God! It is right and meet.) How entirely have we retained this in the ascription: "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God!"

Next comes the Seraphic Hymn, "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus." (Holy, holy, holy, Lord God.) Isaiah, under the Old Dispensation, heard it chanted at the foot of the throne of Jehovah;[1] under the New, the prophet of Patmos repeats it as he heard it sung before the Throne of the Lamb.[2] This chant of surpassing praise, thus revealed to the world, found its echo in every Christian Church. Every Liturgy recognizes it, and nowhere is there any form in which the Eucharist was offered, which does not include it.

Then comes the "Protracted Prayer," as St. Jerome terms it, and it was to this the Early Fathers say that St. Paul referred, when he writes to Timothy, that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men."[3] Thus it is that St. Augustine comments on this passage: "In these words, we understand, with the whole or nearly the whole Church, by *supplications*, those which we use in the celebration of the Sacraments, before the Benediction of what is on the Lord's Table; by *prayers*, those in the Benediction and Sanctification, and breaking for distribution, the whole of which act of supplication is, in almost every Church, concluded by the Lord's Prayer; by *intercessions*, or, as our manuscripts have it, *en-*

[1] Isaiah vi. 3. [2] Rev. iv. 8. [3] 1 Tim. ii. 1.

treaties (*postulations*), those used in blessing the people. For then it is that the Priests, in their character of advocates, present their clients to the Heavenly clemency. Finally, when all is over, and the 'so great sacrifice' has been participated, the whole is concluded by *giving of thanks.*"

After the Consecration, and while the elements are on the Altar, this "Canonical Prayer" having been brought to a conclusion, the Lord's Prayer is pronounced. "For," says St. Jerome, "Christ Himself taught His Apostles to say daily in faith, with boldness, at the offering of His Body, our Father," etc.[1]

The celebrant then proceeds to the breaking of the Bread, whereby he imitates the action of our Lord Himself, who took the bread, blessed and *brake* it. In the distribution, the same form was always used, even from the first Institution of this Rite, that which St. Paul recorded in his account of the celebration of this Sacrament.[2]

Thus it is that we trace,[3] even in Apostolic times, the outline of our Eucharistic Office, and we find that all the solemn prayers and ceremonies we now enjoy, have come down to us from the earliest centuries.

The testimony, indeed, of all tradition is, that even from the first, as soon as the Church was organized so as to regulate its public worship, stated forms were used, in which all could join. Four of these Liturgies which are still extant, and bear the names of different

[1] "Adv. Pelag.," 1, 18. [2] 1 Cor. xi. 24.

[3] For many of these points we are indebted to the Abbé Guéranger. His "Institutions Liturgiques" is written indeed from a Romish point of view, but his array of historical facts is valuable.

Apostles, are evidently those from which all subsequent Liturgies were derived. Of their origin we know not, except what the traditions of the different Churches have given us, but they can be traced back to that period when the words of our Lord still lingered in the memories of His followers, and men were yet living who had known Apostles, and talked with those who had seen their Master in the flesh.

The first of these—the GREAT ORIENTAL LITURGY—bears the name of St. James, and seems to have prevailed in all the Churches of the East, from the Euphrates to the Hellespont, and from the Hellespont to the southern extremity of Greece.

The second—the ALEXANDRIAN—attributed to St. Mark, from time immemorial has been the Liturgy of Egypt, Abyssinia, and the country extending along the Mediterranean Sea toward the West.

The third was—the ROMAN—bearing the name of St. Peter, which prevailed throughout the whole of Italy, Sicily, and some of the Dioceses in Africa.

The fourth was—the GALLICAN—called after St. John, and derived originally from the Church at Ephesus. It was used in Gaul and Spain, and throughout Western Europe.[1]

There is one circumstance connected with these four Liturgies which deserves our notice. It is the striking similarity between them all, not only in doctrine, but also in expression and arrangement. Mr. Palmer asserts,[2] that all the ancient Liturgies now existing, or which can be proved to have existed in those early days,

[1] For the best discussion of the Ancient Liturgies, see Neale's "History of the Holy Eastern Church."

[2] "Orig. Liturg."

resemble one another in all essential features. This, of course, strengthens the argument for their antiquity and their derivation from the same origin. For among the changes which were going on through so many ages, in the formation everywhere of new Dioceses, nothing but a reverence for the Apostolical source from which these original Liturgies were believed to be derived, could have prevented an infinite variety of formularies, and preserved the substantial uniformity which we find to have prevailed in vast districts of the Primitive Church. Separate Liturgies were indeed often used in Provincial Churches, for each Bishop had the right to compose one for his own diocese as long as he did not violate the unity of the faith. Changes, therefore, were made, adapting it to local circumstances, and the Calendar was usually constructed to introduce Festivals in honor of the Saints and Martyrs who had lived and died among them. Still, as we have remarked, there was no material difference from the Great Liturgies which they copied. "The order of the parts was always preserved, the same rites and ceremonies continually repeated, the same ideas and language without material variation, transmitted from generation to generation." [1]

And so, for eighteen hundred years, these Great Liturgies have gone on in different parts of the world, yet gradually altering and becoming more unlike each other and the early forms which have come down to us, as through passing centuries they were adapted to the changing exigencies of particular Churches. And here again we are called to mark that contrast of Oriental and Western character to which we have before

[1] Palmer's "Orig. Liturg.," Preface, p. 9.

referred in the sketch of Arianism. In the changes of the Ritual we see the same influences at work.

"The East is more uniform and unchanging; the West more multiform and variable. Witness the single, changeless Invitatory and Benediction of the one Church, and their endless variations in the other. While the West rings countless changes, according to the season, on the same essential idea, the East prolongs it in one unvaried and majestic toll, from the beginning to the end of the year. The East, again, is more rapt, the West more intellectual. The East loves rather to meditate on God as He is, and on the facts of Christian doctrine as they stand in the Creed; the West contemplates more practically the great phenomena of Christian psychology, and the relations of man to God. Hence, Psalms and Hymns in more profuse abundance characterize the Eastern, larger use and more elaborate adaptations of Scripture the Western Offices. The East, by making the Psalms all her meditation, seems to declare her mind that praise is the only way to knowledge; the West, by her combined Psalm and Lection system, that knowledge is the proper fuel of praise. While the East, again, soars to God in exclamations of angelic self-forgetfulness, the West comprehends all the spiritual needs of man in Collects of matchless profundity, reminding us of the alleged distinction between the seraphim, who love most, and the cherubim, who know most. Thus, the East praises, the West pleads; the one has fixed her eye more intently on the glory-throne of Christ, the other on His cross. Finally, the East has been more inquisitive and inventive in the departments both of knowledge and praise; the West,

more constructive, has wrought up, out of scattered Eastern materials, her exhaustive Athanasian Creed and her matchless Te Deum." [1]

And strange is it that the Anglican Ritual, while it may fail in largeness and beauty in comparison with other Rituals, yet possesses more fully the spirit of these early services than any other. Of the ancient forms how few are now heard in the Churches of Europe! The Gallican and the Spanish have been extinct for centuries, or survive only in the merest fragments. Others, as the Roman and the Milanese, are used only for the devotions of the clergy. In truth, the Offices of the Western Church, from the sixth to the sixteenth century, were, by their origin and their general cast and scheme, monastic, and bear this deeply impressed upon their structure. The study, therefore, of these Western Offices in their old form is an antiquarian one, like the study of a dead language. As public Services of the Church these ancient and grand Offices nowhere exist. The exquisite harmony has ceased. Lauds and Prime, Antiphon and Responsory, are heard no more as they were in the ancient Church.[2]

In our own Liturgy alone the ancient Western Offices really survive. "Psalmody, Scripture, responsive Canticles, Preces, Collects, the media of Europe's ancient worship, banished from all other lands, have taken refuge in the Churches of the English Communion. The English Church is in this matter the heir of the world. She may have diminished her inheritance, but all other Western Churches have thrown it away." [3]

[1] Freeman's "Principles of Divine Service," p. 273.
[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 279.

. . . . "Quod quærimus, hic est,
Aut nusquam."

The Liturgy of the Church of England was derived from the Gallican, and introduced into that country by St. Augustin; it has thus an Oriental, not a Roman origin. The venerable Bede has preserved the letter of St. Gregory the Great to St. Augustin, in answer to one in which he announced that Britain had received the faith, and inquires as to the different Rituals. But St. Gregory tells him he need not follow the Roman Ritual, as such, in which he had been brought up, but to select what he found best in the Roman, Gallican, or other Churches. "Choose, therefore," he writes, "from every Church those things which are pious, religious, and upright, and having, as it were, made them up in one mass, let the minds of the English be accustomed thereto." [1]

Now, St. Augustin, while on his journey to England, spent some time at Marseilles, and between his two visits to England he went to Arles, and there it was he received consecration. He probably, therefore, adopted the Gallican Ritual, in accordance with the advice of St. Gregory. It is in consequence of this Gallic descent that we can trace a greater resemblance in the old English Services to the Oriental than to the Roman forms.

The Reformation, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, found the Church of England still in possession of this precious legacy, though deformed by the additions it had received during ages of superstition. These were swept away, and it was restored again to

[1] Bede's "Eccles. Hist.," p. 47.

its primitive simplicity. So clear were the revisers on this point, that Cranmer (as Jeremy Taylor has recorded) offered to prove that "the order of the Church of England, set out by authority by Edward VI., was the same that had been used in the Church for fifteen hundred years past." Her children now, therefore, utter the same prayers which in the earliest centuries of our faith, on each returning Sunday, were uplifted at Ephesus, at Antioch, in the north of Africa, and through Western Europe.[1] How impressive is the thought of the wide-spread use of these ancient forms, as they are now repeated in many a strange tongue over the whole earth! "The fullness of the stream is the glory of the fountain; and it is because the Ganges is not lost among its native hills, but deepens and widens until it reaches the ocean, that so many pilgrimages are made to its springs."[2]

Each one of us may adopt the words of the poet[3]:

"Mine is no solitary choice,
See *here* the seal of saints impressed;
The prayer of millions swells my voice—
The mind of ages fills my breast."

It is this which gives so great an historical interest

[1] The present Duke of Argyll, in referring to the fact that so many leading Scotch families had "left the communion of Presbytery and joined that of the English Church," says: "Very few have been induced to do so by any previous conversion to Church principles. . . . The deeper source of the extensive alienation which has taken place, is to be found in *the superior attractions of a more Ritual worship*, in the weakness of a predominantly dogmatic and informal system, to keep up permanent attachment in times of religious peace."—*Edinburgh Review*, vol. xcv., p. 477.

[2] "Bishop Thirwall's Charge," 1857. [3] Cunningham.

to our Service, increasing as we become better acquainted with the origin of its prayers. They connect us with important eras of the Church in far-distant ages, and with saintly and heroic men, whose names have been wafted down to us as leaders in the troublous times in which they lived. The Prayer-Book has, therefore, been truly called "a long gallery of Ecclesiastical History." As, for instance, we chant the *Te Deum*—it carries us back to the days when St. Ambrose first uplifted it in the Church at Milan. The *Litany* was given to the Latin Church by Gregory the Great. It was when troubles were gathering about the "Eternal City"—when it was devastated by "war, pestilence, and famine"—that it seemed good to him to gather from the ancient existing Litanies all that could best call forth the penitential devotion of the Church, thus "drawing the flower of them all into one."[1] From the great Patriarch of the Byzantine Church, the eloquent St. Chrysostom, we derive the last prayer with which our Service closes. The "Veni, Creator Spiritus," brings up again the remembrance of St. Ambrose, among whose works it was placed as a Hymn for Pentecost, and always used in the Roman Church in that day, till it was transferred to the Office for the Consecration of a Bishop.[2]

And then with what added interest can we utter the Collect for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity when we remember the circumstances under which it was first incorporated into the Service—that it was amid the expiring agonies which marked the closing days of the Roman Empire, when "men's hearts were failing them for

[1] Hooker's "Eccles. Pol.," lib. v., sec. 42. [2] Dean Comber.

fear" lest the mighty edifice which was tottering to its fall might crush, too, the Church with which it was so intimately connected! Then, indeed, the true-hearted might well pray, "Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance that Thy Church may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

We have gathered, indeed, into this Liturgy the treasures of the olden time, reaching back even to the far-distant Hebrew Church, and appropriating its Hymns of penitence and triumph, so that the Songs of the Kingly Poet of Israel have become the Anthems of the Christian Church. And with these strains from the ancient Tabernacle may be made the utterance of every feeling, whether of sorrow for sin, of thanksgiving for the past, or of prayer for the future. They speak the voice of Humanity, no matter what are the circumstances which call it forth. They are adapted to every exigency of our changing life—to joy and sorrow—to the petition for pardon and the Psalm of thanksgiving—and they who have attempted to improve on them, or to find more fitting words in which to clothe their devotions, have discovered that nothing else could equal their fullness and variety. And now let us give a single instance of this, which History furnishes.

More than two centuries ago, on a wild December day, a band of pilgrims landed on the rock-bound coast of New England. For months they had been storm-tossed upon the ocean, while the land to which their hopes were directed receded in the distant horizon. Yet now they were safe from the perils of the sea at

us, they are marked in the outward world by those changes which God Himself has ordained. The sun rises and sets, and the moon is "established as a faithful witness in heaven." Thus day and night, light and darkness, succeed each other, and man labors and rests as they prescribe. The seasons, too, pass by—Spring and Autumn, Summer and Winter, Seed-time and Harvest. To these changes men are compelled to conform —to adapt themselves to them. But all this is of the outward world. It regards the way in which Time should be distributed in its service—how man should rise and sleep, and "go forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening"—how he should plod along the path of this world's business.

Now, the Church comes in, and by her Services claims an interest in this Time. Her Calendar is the ceaseless witness that it belongs not to us—not to the world—but to our Lord. She has her appointed Prayers for Morning and Evening, that devotion may go with us into our worldly business. She takes the first day of the week, and sanctifies it by a peculiar consecration. And then how admirably does she lead us through the year with our Lord! Advent and Christmas, Good-Friday, Easter, and Ascension, with their intermediate Festivals, trace the course of His solemn pilgrimage from the manger of Bethlehem to the agonies of Calvary, and thence again to the heights of Olivet, where He parted from His disciples, and "a cloud received Him out of their sight." She has her alternations of Vigils and Fasts—of Abstinence and Feasts—her voice of warning to the living, and her commemoration of the dead who have passed away, that those who

still linger in their earthly homes may imbibe their spirit and tread in their footsteps. And then, once in each year, she calls us to times of peculiar sadness. She has her Lenten Season of forty days of fasting and mortification and self-denial and weeping for sin, that her children may free themselves more entirely from this world's influences. Thus the Holy Seasons to which her Ritual calls us are scattered through the year, sanctifying each part of it. Like low and solemn sounds, they appeal to the spirit, now in notes of sadness and now of joy, making the heart, as it were, the dwelling-place of a perpetual echo of heavenly sounds, realizing those words of the Apostle, "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them are without signification." [1]

Thus it is that the Church endeavors to consecrate the time which otherwise would pass by us without leaving any valuable lesson. She breathes a new spirit into it, and makes what is interfering with our happiness minister to our spiritual progress. For is it not an unhappy influence which Time produces, with resistless authority wearing away our love and our affections, and forcing us to be forgetful and cold, when we earnestly desire to be otherwise? "There are many of us who have lost parents or children, or friends, who would fain have kept alive within our hearts the same keen and lively memory of them, as we had when first they died. But Time will not let us; it hurries us along; and our impressions grow fainter and fainter, till at last they almost die away. Then in our friendship, and our loves, time grievously interferes with us. It will not

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 10.

allow the glow of our affection to continue. We cease to love friends we have loved before for no other reason than that the lapse of time has cooled our love, and we are not able to withstand its power." [1]

And how often are we forced to feel that we, too, must be subjected to this Lethean power, and be forgotten as are those who have trodden the path of life before us! As we take our place in the toil and business of this lower world, and endeavor to play our little part in the warfare which is waging about us, how often are we forced to feel that one day all this will be going on as now, unabated in its earnestness, when we are gone, and the places which now know us are to know us no more forever! "Men will have our houses and our gardens, and will be glad and happy therein. They will walk about the same streets, and have the same joyous meetings, when we shall be slowly and neglectedly falling back into the cold earth out of which we came; and they who loved us will have laid us therein, shed a few slight tears upon our coffin, gone to their pleasure or their toil, and straightway forgotten all about us. And yet they are not unfaithful or unaffectionate. It is Time's fault, not theirs." [2]

Now this is what the Calendar does, when it takes this flight of time and teaches us from it the lesson of our own immortality. From this craving within us which nothing here can satisfy, this shrinking back from forgetfulness, this fleeting current which goes by us, and which we cannot arrest, the Church proves to us that Time is nothing, but everything is leading us on to the Eternity beyond.

[1] F. W. Faber. [2] Ibid.

And this Calendar, which places such solemn lessons before us, as we go onward in life, is not the invention of modern wisdom, but the growth of ages better than our own, of ages of self-denial and holiness, when men stood on a height of sanctity to which now we seem unable to attain. It was moulded into its form by men who, in the words of Scripture, "in all their works praised the Holy One most High with words of glory, and with their whole heart sang songs; who set singers before the altar, that by their voices they might make sweet melody, and daily sing praises in their songs; and beautified their feasts, and set in order the solemn times until the end, that they might praise His holy name, and that the Temple might sound from morning."[1] Thus it is, that while our Service witnesseth for the wisdom of ancient Christendom, and comes to us instinct with the spirit of the Ritual of Western Europe in the olden days, it also sanctifies the year with its holy times.

Again, the Service bears its witness *against the prevailing selfishness of the world.* The first requisition our Lord made of those whom He invited to become His followers was, that they should deny themselves. It was requiring the hardest struggle through which the human heart could pass, thus to lay aside its own will and the devotion to its own interests, and, with a philanthropy which extends to a suffering world, to go forth willing to sacrifice itself for the benefit of others. In the earnestness of worldly strife we forget the chain which binds us to those who share the same nature with ourselves. It rusts and decays in the atmosphere of this sordid world.

[1] Eccles. xlvii. 8.

Now, it is the object of our faith to restore this, to bid man come out from himself, to show him there are other and higher interests than his own for which to live, and a nobler field open to him than the following out of his own private ends. It is to teach him to seek not his own but others' good.

And this lesson is taught us through the medium of its Services. Look at the very nature of its prayers, how many of them are for others, how it looks through the whole scale of humanity, and offers up its petitions for all men everywhere. The Church directs us to pray for those who rule over us in spiritual and in temporal things; for the sick and the afflicted; for travelers on the land and on the tossing sea; for fatherless children and widows; for those who are desolate and oppressed; and for all who in the weakness of their nature are "sounding on their dim and perilous way." Everything in her Services teaches us to look out of ourselves to our risen Lord, or else to His poor and desolate children who are scattered abroad throughout this evil world, that they may be saved through Christ forever.

And so we might take the Services separately, and show how each one is characterized by the spirit of broad and Catholic love. The only prayer which our Lord Himself taught us to use—that which bears His name—is throughout in the plural number. And how does the petition, "Thy Kingdom come," carry us beyond the bounds of our own particular Church or country, breaking down the narrow barriers of nationality, and inspiring us with great thoughts of that happy period pictured by the prophets, when every heart shall

bow in love to the Prince of peace, and righteousness mantle this renovated earth!

Above all, in the blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, how solemn the lesson we are taught of our union, not only with our Lord, but with all His true followers! We feel that we are alike members of His mystical body, and, as St. Paul declares, "we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one body."[1] We realize truly the Communion of Saints, as we gather about that Altar which has been the home of His children since He departed from the earth, and will unite them all in one holy fellowship, until He comes again to claim His heritage. Who can be worldly, or uncharitable, or narrow himself down to paltry and selfish interests, when the Heavens seem opened to him, and its magnificent rewards are almost within his reach, as he joins with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of Heaven, to laud and magnify the glorious name of Him that sitteth upon the throne!

And still more touchingly is this witness borne by *her commemoration of the dead.* The world would teach us to forget them, that the chain is broken which bound us to those who have passed away, and when ages have rolled between us, they have obliterated every trace of union. But the Church tells us it is not so, and in the Festival of All-Saints she shows we have fellowship also with the dead. Like the men of Galilee, after the Ascension, we still stand upon the mountain and look upward toward Heaven, that we may see the pathway of their glory.

[1] 1 Cor. x. 17.

by the brightness of a year's honor, and already, in the continuance of its victorious glory, has passed over the rolling circle of the returning year. The rising sun and the waning moon enlightened the world; but to you, He who made the sun and moon was a greater light in your dungeon, and the brightness of Christ glowing in your hearts and minds irradiated with that eternal and brilliant light the gloom of the place of punishment, which to others was so horrible and deadly. The winter has passed through the vicissitudes of the months; but you, shut up in prison, were undergoing, instead of the inclemencies of winter, the winter of persecution. To the winter succeeded the mildness of spring, rejoicing with roses, and crowned with flowers; but to you were present roses and flowers from the delights of Paradise, and celestial garlands wreathed your brows. Behold, the summer is fruitful with the fertility of the harvest, and the thrashing-floor is filled with grain; but you who have sown glory, reap the fruit of glory, and, placed in the Lord's thrashing-floor, behold the chaff burned up with unquenchable fire; you yourselves as grains of wheat, winnowed with precious corn, now purged and garnered, regard the dwelling-place of a prison as your granary. Nor is there wanting to the autumn spiritual grace for discharging the duties of the season. The vintage is pressed out-of-doors, and the grape which shall hereafter flow into the cups is trodden in the presses. You, rich bunches out of the Lord's vineyard, and branches with fruit already ripe, trodden by the tribulation of worldly pressure, fill your wine-press in the torturing prison, and shed your blood instead of wine; brave to bear suffering, you willingly

drink the cup of martyrdom. Thus the year rolls on with the Lord's servants; thus are celebrated the vicissitudes of the seasons with spiritual deserts, and with celestial rewards." [1]

All this to us is only a distant picture, seen through the dimness of fifteen hundred years, but to those then living it was a fearful reality. The men of that generation realized, as we cannot, the heroic self-devotion which marked the painful entrance of these combatants into the mansions of their Father's glory. They knew, too, that "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church." We find, therefore, a glory gathered around the memory of the martyrs which could never be claimed for the heroes of this world's conflicts, and the Church now remembers them in her most solemn anthem, when she declares, "The noble army of martyrs praise Thee!"

In all the ancient Liturgies, indeed, there was a prayer "commemorative of the faithful departed," which, at the Reformation, was omitted from our Prayer-Book for fear it would give countenance, in the minds of the uneducated, to the prayers for the dead which formed one error of the Roman Ritual. It was in these words, and, as will be at once perceived, was only an affectionate remembrance of those who had slept in the faith: "We commend unto Thy mercy, O Lord, all other Thy servants which are departed hence from us with the sign of faith, and now do rest in the sleep of peace. Grant unto them, we beseech Thee, Thy mercy and everlasting peace, and that, at the day of the general resurrection, we, and all they which be

[1] St. Cyp., Epis. xv.

of the mystical body of Thy Son, may altogether be set at his right hand, and hear that His most joyful voice: 'Come unto me, O ye that be blessed of my Father, and possess the kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world!' Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate."

And how much in accordance with every feeling of our nature is this witness of the Church to our union with the dead! It recognizes a tie binding us to them of which we cannot, if we would, divest ourselves. In our goings out and our comings in, when we rise and when we lie down, everywhere the thoughtful mind finds itself in immediate contact with those who have already passed the threshold of the Infinite and entered the unknown Eternity.

They speak to us by their works. We are surrounded by the evidences of their existence. Everything which we have we owe to them. In science, and literature, and art, they prepared the way and wrought out all their discoveries, and when the long course of ages had perfected these, we came to enjoy them. "We reap that whereon we bestowed no labor: other men labored, and we are entered into their labors."[1] Our own life here is but a span—too short to accomplish much for ourselves—and well, therefore, is it for us, that the dead have been before us and toiled for our benefit. How different in this respect is our situation from that of the first man who lived upon the earth! Around him all was in its primeval freshness, and he saw no traces of other beings like himself. He inherited nothing, no records of experience, no beaten path in

[1] John iv. 38.

which he could tread, no footsteps to guide him, not even a grave to show that others had preceded him in the race of life. He stood alone. He was the first of that long procession of human beings who were to bequeath to us the result of all their efforts—how they prospered and how they fell—their trials and successes as life went on.

And that chain has gone on, each generation contributing its share for the benefit of those who come after, until it has reached our day. But is there not something sublime in this view of human life, this union of the past and the future, this tie which links men together in one mighty fellowship? They who went before us laid the foundation of that vast edifice, which through ages has been gradually rising in power and strength; and when they were called away from their labors, others of this common brotherhood who succeeded them took up the implements of labor which they had dropped, and built on where they had been forced to leave off, until at length they too ceased from their work. And thus the task came to us, that we also might do our share. We are to contribute our portion toward the welfare of our race, that when we have gone we may not have lived in vain for those who come after. Thus it is, then, that from the distant past, from the populous centuries that have gone, there comes to us a solemn and mysterious sound, which is their voice. The earth is filled with their memories, and in each moment of busy, eager, craving life, we are brought in contact with the records of the dead. Well, then, may they find a place in the devotions of the Church!

But there are more tender and touching memories than these. There are the memorials of those who are not separated from us by distant ages, but who have gone from our very midst. Peacefully are they sleeping in the populous cities of the dead, for the sphere of life is narrow compared with the mighty confines of the dead. They need no care, for their spirits are with God, and their bodies are committed to Him who cares even for the dust of His saints. Winter storms sweep above them, but they heed them not; spring with its flowers, and autumn with its golden pomp, pass by, but they wake no consciousness in the silent sleepers below. The sunbeams fall brightly upon their graves, but they shall see no light until the last morning calls them again from the dust; and there they silently await our coming.

But by how many ways do they speak to us! One by one they have passed away, and perhaps not until they were gone forever did we realize their worth, or feel that we had not prized them as we should; then there flowed back upon the mind remembered acts of kindness and words of affection, until the very tones seemed to linger in our hearing, and forms which now are dust stood before us in all the well-known lineaments of life. Thus it is that the dead are united to us by the chain of memory, which runs back to what they once were, and they speak to us in our firesides and in our chambers, so that we realize that, though invisible, life itself is filled with their presence. The world around, with all its familiar scenes, becomes consecrated by the memory of the dead. "The communion of saints" gives a holy imaginativeness to our daily life.

Is it not well, then, thus with reverence, when we offer up our prayers in God's house, to remember the dead? It is not a subject of mere speculation or of sentiment alone; it is one of practical use, which can give a coloring to our daily life. The times are becoming intensely worldly. Day by day the crowds around us seem to be waxing more earnest in the pursuit of wealth, and the sound of their exertions rises up with ceaseless din. Is it not well, then, to avail ourselves of any arguments which will break these associations and connect us with the spiritual world? And what can do it so effectually as this remembrance of the dead? They are ever passing away, and therefore the appeal is constantly recurring. Year by year, as familiar faces depart, comes to us the proof that here we are only strangers and pilgrims. Our treasures have gone before us, and thus time is ever strengthening the ties which bind us to the spiritual world. The departed are remembered among the holiest associations of the past. "In memory of the dead" is the highest consecration which language can give. They are not dead to us, but are still near and familiar friends. They are to us "a presence and a power;" a thousand things in the pilgrimage of life are touched by our association with them, as if by a quickening spirit, and we never go to the Altar of our Lord without remembering them, when we "bless God's holy name for all His servants departed this life in His faith and fear, and beseech Him to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of His heavenly kingdom."

For us, too, the very Burial Service has its solemn

comfort, as it sublimely refers forward to the hour when Christ shall come again, and the slumbering dead be raised to meet Him. And the elevating truths of Scripture are gifted with a new meaning to our hearts, when those hearts have been touched with sorrow. We rejoice, as it lays open to us the precious glories which await the just, and follow on its revelations as they rise, steadily and calmly, clear as the angel's trumpet of which they tell, until they merge into the sound of triumph and of victory, and we hear echoing through our desolate homes those cheering words of blessing and encouragement: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

We see, then, how the Church by her Services takes hold of this trait in our nature and uses it for our own spiritual benefit. We ask: "Where are the departed? Where are the confessors and martyrs of early days? Where are the just who since their time have passed away from the sight of earthly eyes? Is it possible that we are no longer inhabitants of the same world, but that each has to think of the other in a perfectly different state of existence? Is the link which bound us together broken, or are they still conscious of what we are doing here, and indulge in the confident anticipation that we shall after a time be added to their society?" The answer is: "They are still with the Church, though invisible. They are 'under the altar,' and thence, as the Apostle shows us,[1] they raise their

[1] Rev. vi. 9.

voices to Him who is the God both of the dead and of the living. 'They have gone nearer Christ than we are. They see greater things than we see. They are safe from the world, which we are not.' With them the toils and sorrows of this world are over, and as they look back upon them, now that they have secured their bliss, they must realize in all its fullness the lesson contained in that noble line of the poet—

'The glory dies not and the grief is past.'"

Thus we have "come to the spirits of just men made perfect," who, though absent in body, are yet present in spirit. And when we worship in our earthly temples, small is the company of the living compared with the invisible congregation of the dead. They have only passed before us, the first ranks of the Church, united still to us their brethren. One by one the Church commemorates the leaders in "the sacramental host of God's elect," the Apostles of our Lord; and often does she refer, as we have shown, to those who were their followers. Thus it is that the Church opens our sphere of vision even beyond the bounds of this world, and teaches us, too, to overcome our selfishness.

We have had occasion, in these pages, in several instances, to refer to that Great Eastern Church, of which, with its sixty-five millions of souls, we know so little, and about which we so often, from our ignorance, speak so disparagingly.[1] In concluding these sketches, we

[1] In a late speech by Canon Liddon, in London, he thus refers to the Oriental Church: "The Eastern Church fares hardly at the hands of the Europeans of the West. Rome cannot forgive the rejection of her authority; those who are farthest from Rome cannot forgive the sacramental characteristics of this ancient communion. Doubtless there are

would give one more illustration from the Liturgical Services of that Oriental Church, to show the power which these forms must exert in impressing the hearts and minds of their people. We wish to bring before our readers a picture of the Rites and Services with which, in those Eastern lands, they accompany the burial of the dead, that they may see how this Ritual, which has come down through more than a thousand years, inculcates the most lofty truths of our faith.[1]

By their Services for the departed, Death is made the teacher of the living, and compelled to bear with him the tidings of his own defeat, proclaiming, wherever he goes, that his sting has been taken from him. Thus the child learns the awful truth of his future existence from the corpse of the parent, who, living, would never have taught it to him; and the dead infant, whose feeble lips had not yet power to frame the first faint stammering word, preaches with a terrible elo-

features in her system which we might wish to see changed; but when that Church has had freedom, she has shown her capacity for missionary labor of the noblest kind. It might seem, too, as if God had assigned to different parts of His great family the duty of illustrating different aspects of the Christian life. Rome manifested the beauty and power of high organization; England maintained and exhibited the sacred rights of the individual conscience; Western Christendom, in its various forms, illustrated the active and creative side of Christianity, its progress and its aggressiveness; to the Eastern Church has been confided the duty of showing by persistent endurance the excellence of the passive virtues. For four hundred years it might be said by them, 'Therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.'"

[1] For the graphic view of these Services the writer would acknowledge his indebtedness to the *Christian Remembrancer*, April, 1850. Of course these Services can only be seen in their fullness in lands in the East in which the Greek Church is dominant.

quence, to the men grown old in sin, of the life and the judgment to come.

In those Eastern homes scarce is the last agony over when the salutation of peace is heard upon the threshold, and the servant of the Church appears to watch over her departed child. Most often it is the priest himself who has received the dying breath, and given the last absolution; but at least he has been there to anoint the absolved penitent with holy oil, and celebrate on his behalf the Eucharistic Sacrifice. And now the dead body, made sacred by these rites, has become exclusively the Church's care, and from the moment that the priest appears in presence of the corpse, the friends retire to perform the only work which yet remains for them, in prayer and intercession. He enters, the neophyte preceding him with the cross, and standing, while he signs the corpse with the threefold sign, he utters a brief prayer. And, ever as he speaks, he fills the room with clouds of fragrant incense, ascending up like the supplications of the Saints, that wait in their white robes till their brethren shall be fulfilled.

But not long does he linger there, nor allow this member of the great family of Christ—who now by his death has entered into visible communion with the Church triumphant—to remain among these strangers of the earth. When himself has closed the eyes, and sealed them with the sign of the Son of Man, until that day when, opening at His call, they shall behold Christ glorious in the heavens, he bids the people raise his sleeping charge and bear it forth to the Church, the antechamber of that grave which is the door of Heaven. Thus, not above an hour or two after the moment of

death, the corpse is carried to that holy place which is now alone his home on earth; and then it is that, by the sure tokens of the sweet death-chant and the coming of the Cross, the dwellers of the Eastern city know that one is passing from among them to his rest. Yet truly to their eyes it still must seem rather a march triumphant than a funeral-train, for there is no gloom, no dismal pomp, no black pall, hiding, as it were, some sight of shame; but only that music glad with holy hope, and the breath of flowers mingling with the sweeter incense, and, ever caught up from voice to voice, the deep, exulting cry: "Thou art the Resurrection; Thou, O Christ!"

Long before the procession comes in sight, through the busy, crowded streets, they hear, floating through the clear air, soft and wild as the music of a dream, the low, faint murmur of a mournful harmony. It is a strain peculiar as it is melodious, most strangely sweet and sad, and so utterly unlike all other melodies that none ever yet heard it and failed to recognize the glorious old death-chant which for so many centuries has been the lullaby with which the Eastern Christians have sung their dead to sleep. It is a noble song of Victory —the victory of the Cross over Death and Hell—the triumph of the Holy One, who was dead and is alive, over the corruption He was never suffered to behold. It is ancient beyond all memory of man—a whisper which has echoed down through the crash and turmoil of the passing centuries, from those first days of purity, when the one Church Catholic was still unrent by the sore divisions of these last-afflicted times. Age after age, while the great monarchies have been swept away, leaving behind a scarce-remembered name, and genera-

tions successively have rushed past that dark brink that binds our mortal view, unchanging over the individual dead, those time-honored words have uttered one sacred, unfailing promise, as earnest to an ever-living hope. And as the well-known strain of wailing sweetness penetrates among the busy crowds, each one desists with eager haste from his employment to listen to the good tidings it conveys. Clear and distinct that anthem of the Resurrection is intoned by the deep voices of the priests, in words so simple, and yet so powerful, that the most ignorant among the people cannot fail to gather and to understand the wondrous meaning; while answering back, in tones more pure and thrilling still, the sweet voices of the youthful neophytes take up the chorus, of which the burden is ever how man through death attains to life eternal!

Then, far and near, wherever those words of promise, like an angel's voice, are heard, each individual bows his head, and signs himself on breast and brow with the Holy Cross, which alone can be his passport to the land of deathless joy, while, with earnest supplication, as the truth of Eternity is thus palpably brought before him, he utters the appointed ejaculation: "Lord, have mercy upon us! Christ, have mercy upon us!"

So universally are these observances inculcated on all who witness the journeying homeward of a corpse, that the very little infants are seen with their tiny hands striving to make the sacred sign, as yet so far beyond their comprehension, and murmuring with their stammering lips the early-taught petition.

Then all reverently stand aside, with head uncovered, as the funeral appears in the distance. The con-

veying of the body to the church, which is the first part of the ceremonial, is most often performed at sunset, for they love that the pale glory of the dying day should rest upon the face where the light of life hath faded; and thus it mostly happens that the last sunbeam flashes with its expiring radiance full upon the lofty cross that first meets the eye as the procession comes in sight. It is borne several paces in advance, carried upright by a young child, the youngest of the neophytes —for the Eastern Church, with a touching humility, ever appointed in all her offices that none should be permitted to the high office of Cross-bearer save only these little ones, of whom is the Kingdom of Heaven. Their innocent hands alone shall presume to touch that sacred token—holier in their innocence, as they believe, than even those of the anointed priest; for they think that those tender lambs, newly washed in the baptismal waters, have more than any others been made Kings and Priests unto God and His Father. Three young children, then, walk solemnly in front, the one clasping the great cross within his folded arms, and bending down his head behind it with humble reverence, so that at a distance it seems self-impelled through the air, while, on either side of him, his two companions bear the symbols of the Holy Trinity, which are painted in signs easily understood, on circular panels, elevated on long poles. The three neophytes, according to invariable rule, have their heads uncovered, so that their long, flowing hair falls on their shoulders and veils the downcast eyes they never raise. It is a touching thing to see them thus on the threshold of life marshaling with such reverence and solemnity an elder brother to the tomb.

Immediately behind them walk the priests, who, from the first moment the mortal breath departed, have come forward as guardians of that heir of immortality, and have allowed no hand but theirs, the anointed of the Lord, to minister unto his last necessity. So soon as, by the mighty barrier of death, he was exiled from his family, from the love of friends, and the sweet charities of home, then has the Church opened wide her arms to receive him, and gathered him, like a jealous mother, to her own loving care.

There are never less than three or four priests accompanying each funeral, for among the Eastern Christians the distinctions of rank and station cease with this mortal life. These holy men walk abreast, heralding the corpse, and wearing the flowing, priestly robes, which they never quit on any occasion, with one hand swinging to and fro the silver censor, and with the other holding the book from which they chant the blessed words of promise; then treading closely in their steps, even as it is meet all men should follow the leading of anointed guides, the bearers of the dead advance. They wear no mourning-dress, for they conceive not that is a day of mourning, but, rather, one of triumph, and they carry between them, by the aid of two long poles, an open bier, covered only with a fair, white cloth.

And there, reposing calmly, with the sunlight on his brow, the departed lies in holy rest, and ready to meet the gaze of all. Never would they hide from the eyes of men that countenance serene, but rather bid all come to look with thankful hearts upon the face of the dead, for they count him in all things a conqueror—vanquisher over the mortal existence with all its pow-

ers of agony, and over the last enemy, which shall be destroyed with all its nameless dread. From the death-struggle and the life-struggle comes he forth alike triumphant; the first shall appall, the last shall torture him no more; therefore, they place upon his brow the conqueror's crown, and robe him in the fairest dress he ever wore on gala-days, for what high festival in all his past career was like to this? What was that hour of deep rejoicing, when at the altar his young bride took him by the hand, to walk with him the pilgrimage of earth, compared to the far brighter moment when death clasped him still more tenderly, to lead him forth into the bliss of life eternal? So shall no mournful shroud be put upon him, but the gayest dress, in token of festivity, with the laurel-wreath of victory. His arms are crossed upon his breast in mute, submissive faith, and clasped within them is the representation of our Lord upon the cross. As he is borne along, all press with eager haste to look upon the countenance of him who truly is even as they represent him, "Victor atque victima, atque ideo victor quia victima," and generally they follow him upon his road, gazing still, fascinated by the aspect of his rest.

All who desire it may accompany their departed brother to the church, where the corpse is reverently placed immediately before the holy doors, the feet turned eastward and the cross held upright, ever placed there carefully before the fixed, calm eyes, as though the intensity of their gaze upon the holy symbol had set them in that rigid stillness. The deacon then lights the appointed number of tapers at the head and foot of the bier, while every individual present receives one in

his hand, so that although the sunshine streams through the open door and windows, the church is yet full of another softer radiance, in token that the Church of Christ hath truly light within her, which is not that of mortal day. The priests then range themselves around the corpse, and if there be a Bishop present, as often happens, he stands at the head, his hand upraised in the appointed form, so that the Church's blessing overshadows still that sacred dead, who seems to lie so meek and tranquil, because of the holy power thus shed upon him. The Service then commences with the chanting of the Psalm *Qui habitat* (Psalm xci.) and others, followed by prayers most beautiful and full of consolation, ranging ever round the one sublime hope of the rising of the flesh in glory, as though the Church conceived that the very sight of that corpse could awaken no other thought; and ever at the close of each the priest pauses for a moment, while the voices of the deacons and the neophytes take up again the glad exulting cry, "Thou art the Resurrection."

The lesson is then read,[1] beginning with the words, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep," and terminating, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." When it is over there is an interval of silence, although the deep abstraction of all present shows that the voice of the soul is not hushed; and then, at a signal from the priest, the friends of the departed come forward one by one to press the final kiss upon his lips, uttering at the same moment a stated prayer, that the whole body of His Church may soon be made partakers of His glorious

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 13–17.

resurrection. And there is a deep wisdom in thus connecting the last expressions of mortal tenderness with the aspiration after that holier love in which all shall be one hereafter. The calm farewell thus ended, they retire from before the altar, the words yet lingering on their lips which speak of a blessed meeting with him they are now quitting, where they shall part no more; the priest advances in front of the corpse and delivers an oration; that taken from the Homily[1] of St. John Chrysostom, which is chiefly used by the Eastern Church on solemn occasions, is beautifully appropriate.

As the last words die away in the solemn tones of the priest, there is a pause, and then, mingling in one deep voice of triumph, once more the cry arises from every individual present, so oft repeated as though they could not cease to tell their joy: "Thou art the Resurrection; Thou, O Christ!"

This, for the present, terminates the ceremony. The priest makes the sign of the cross, first over the dead, then over the living, thus uniting them in the common hope, and so departs from the church, followed by the whole concourse of the people, leaving the corpse alone lying beneath the altar—like the souls that were bid to rest a little season—the lights burning round it solemnly, and the incense still hanging over it like a cloud of fragrance. Thus the dead rests for the night, surrounded, as the ancient faith declares, with the holy angels, who linger forever round the altar. At sunrise the priests return for their charge, and the train goes forth in the same order as before, and however great the distance from the church to the grave-

[1] λογος παραινετιχος.

yard, the priests cease not to chant the hymn of immortality, and over the burning plains which often they traverse, the sweet strain floats away in distant echoes, making the desert joyful with hope.

In the larger cemeteries there is very often a small chapel especially consecrated for the "Missa pro Defunctis," but this is not celebrated till thirty days after the death. It is, therefore, to the spot of interment that the train proceeds at once, where the priest takes up his station at the head and the cross-bearer at the foot of the grave, and ever as they approach, louder and louder, not from the neophytes alone, but from all present, swells the cry proclaiming that He is the resurrection. But soon the voices are reverently hushed, while many holy prayers are said, and at last the deacons, at a sign from the priests, lower the corpse into the grave, which is always very shallow; then, while still upon the face the last ray of earthly light is beaming, the last token is given of the human love which was the sunshine of his soul. The friend that in life lay nearest to that still heart—most often the cherished wife that was the faithful guardian of his happiness—draws near, and kneels down on the very brink of his new couch, and with a voice of passionate entreaty, into which is gathered all the deep longing of the widowed soul, she utters three times the word "Ella," *come*, and if he answers not—if that most mournful appeal fails to win him from his silent rest, then do they know that he is dead indeed, and far beyond all reach of that poor, impotent affection. She withdraws, the chief of those who loved him on this earth, that the representative of love divine may take her place. The priest gently cov-

ers the quiet countenance with a white veil; next he pours into the grave a little wine, in type of that which he trusts the departed shall taste anew in the kingdom of his Father; and, finally, taking in his own anointed hands as much of earth as they can hold, he strews it on the dead body in the form of a cross, uttering aloud these words, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the round world, and they that dwell therein."

And truly replete with a glorious and solemn meaning is that sentence when uttered at such a moment. For if the earth be the Lord's and "the fullness thereof," full even to repletion is it with the bodies of the dead, which thus are proclaimed to be His, which none shall ever pluck out of His hand, but which from their dwelling in the dust shall awake and sing, when the earth shall cast out the dead. Having spoken these words, the priest and deacons proceed to fill up the grave; some of the nearest relatives alone being allowed to assist in this sacred office, and that a *hired* hand should have a share in it is wholly inadmissible. As the form disappears under the earth, the friends press forward, and each one says, as he gives his last look, that which to his great and exceeding comfort his heart believes, "It is well with thee, my brother!" Again, over the grave the holy sign is made, responded to by all around, and so they depart and leave him to his rest.

But this is only for a season. Most unlike the chill and systematic oblivion which seems to overspread the memory of those departed from among ourselves, every effort is made by the Eastern Christians to bind, as it were, the living spirit to themselves more closely still

by holiest links. Although he hath gone home a little while before them, his name is on their lips in every prayer, and anxiously do they look forward to the Feast of the Commemoration, which takes place on the thirtieth day. Then, the Holy Eucharist is celebrated, and afterward it is offered whenever the friends feel desirous to renew so blessed a remembrance of him, not lost, although to their eyes of flesh unseen, and they love on such occasions to decorate the church with flowers, and to fill it with lights and all things which most betoken joy and gladness, so that many even of the little children, who may never have seen the departed brother or friend, are thus led specially to connect death only with images of holy hope and rejoicing in the risen Lord; nor can they ever dread it as the enemy that shall shut them out from the love of those to whom their own hearts cling. For ever, on the anniversary of the departure, the survivors fail not to repair to the grave where they have hid their treasures, and there kneeling down, they press a fond, clinging kiss upon the earth that covers them, and whispering the well-remembered and beloved name, they bid him have patience yet a little till they come, and assure him, with many a soft, endearing word, that he is not forgotten, but that faithfully they love him still.

Such is the lesson taught by this ancient Ritual. Death is seen no longer as the King of Terrors and the destroying enemy, but himself the slave and laborer of that Mercy which doth bless in life eternal; constrained by the very power which seems to annihilate and kill, to fit the children of the kingdom for an existence which is never-ending joy, and with his own hand to

lead them through the tomb where he hath no power to hold them, as through an open portal, to the glory of the never-fading day. Even as of old the captives were compelled to tell out the great deeds of their conquerors, so should this vanquished and stingless Death forever proclaim aloud the victory of the resurrection. As the herald of immortality he appears before men; as the gentle Messenger sent by the Lord of Life, to gather with gentle pity into His merciful arms the poor wanderers exiled into this sad world of weeping, and safely lead them homeward to their Father's house!

How high and holy then is the doctrine taught by the Eastern Church through its Burial Service! It is that the one holy office which Death should perform in this world is, to sit, robed in garments of celestial white, at the door of man's Universal Tomb, in likeness of that glorious angel who once rolled back the stone from the gate of the Sepulchre, and sat thereon. And to all who come there seeking their beloved and weeping, as she came and wept who loved much, this angelic Death, in tones as sweet as was the voice of that bright Messenger, says gently: "Why seek ye here the living among the dead? He is risen, and therefore all they that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him!"

V.

CONCLUSION.

"The golden evening brightens in the west;
Soon, soon to faithful warriors comes the rest;
Sweet is the calm of Paradise the blest."

W. W. How.

V.

CONCLUSION.

We have thus endeavored to present our readers with a picture of the Church of the Apostles in its doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers. Not, indeed, merely to gratify curiosity have we thus unrolled the records of the past, and summoned up, over the wastes of eighteen centuries, the testimony of these ancient believers. Our object was to give, even in this fragmentary form, a glimpse of the ancient Church, as it stood before the world in its Unity, pure in doctrine, reverencing, in its ceaseless worship, the Sacraments of its Lord, and ever sending up those holy words of prayer which we have now inherited.

The picture carries with it its own solemn lesson. Involuntarily we feel the contrast between those early times of earnest faith, and the worldliness of these latter days. It requires no voice of an inspired prophet to show how far we have wandered from the example of those who stood nearest to the days of our Lord's pilgrimage on earth. From our own times we gather but little material to add to the sacred record of the *Acta Sanctorum.*

There is a legend of the Eastern Church which, fable as it is, may give a speaking warning to the fol-

lowers of our Lord "through the ages all along." It is the story of the seven Christian youths of Ephesus, who in one of the later persecutions of the third century fled from the city and took refuge in a cavern in the neighboring mountains. There they fell asleep, and by a miracle their slumber was prolonged till more than a century had passed; then they awoke, and unconscious of the flight of time, or that their sleep had lasted beyond a single night, they cautiously returned to the city.

But everything seemed changed. New buildings had arisen, and the whole aspect of the once familiar streets was altered. The very air and manner of the people were different; and, feeling as if they were walking in a dream, they secretly inquired whether there were any Christians in the city. "Christians!" was the reply; "why, we are all Christians." On the one side they were pointed to a splendid church, surmounted by the once despised Cross, and on the other to schools founded to teach the doctrines of Jesus. What gladness filled their hearts as they learned the mighty renovation which had swept over the world, and heard that the faith had penetrated even into Cæsar's palace!

But soon they learned the reality. It seemed to them that with the apparent triumph of the cause the spirit of the faith had departed. The self-denial and holiness of the days they once knew were gone, and, sorrowing, they exclaimed: "You have shown us many edifices apparently devoted to the Christian faith, and countless multitudes who have assumed that name; but where, oh where, are the Christians?"

And so they returned in sadness to their cave, and He who "giveth His beloved sleep" wrapped them once more in unconsciousness; but it was that dreamless slumber not to be broken until their Master should come again. They went to rejoin again the confessors and martyrs of their own age, with whom alone they could sympathize in thought and feeling.

In this way it is that the legend brings before us the plain and undeniable contrast between the Church in the martyr days of Diocletian, and its successor under the courtly favor of Theodosius. And so, in this volume, we would show the wide difference between the Church of the third century and that of the nineteenth. We would have our readers see how much nobler was the life of those early days, which was symbolized by the Cross, as those who bore the Christian name were obliged to tread their path over the thorn and brier, with bleeding feet and aching heart, till life became one long sacrifice to Christian duty. And if, now, all this is changed, and the world smiles around us, so that the Christian life has ceased outwardly to be a warfare and a conflict, but goes peacefully on, surrounded by all spiritual blessings, until it merges quietly in the grave, we may well ask the question, whether we have not lost some of the most elevated traits of Christian discipline.

We would have those, then, who have accompanied us through these pages, to realize that there is a tie which binds them to those early days which even the intervening ages have not broken. Then the dead in Christ will cheer them on their way, sweet voices speak to them from within the veil, and the spirit of the Up-

per Sanctuary be breathed into their hearts. Thus they will be prepared for this holy fellowship, and when earth to them is no more, they will find themselves with the friends who had passed away before, once more around them; the pledges of their Lord fulfilled to the utmost, and every want of their immortal being satisfied; for then they will be members of the Church in Heaven.

And how glorious will be the change from the uncertainty of this world to that bliss which, when once it is gained, can be lost no more forever! What rapture to the spirit, when the shore is reached, and it feels that temptation and trial forever are passed, and the long ages which stretch before it are to be marked only by a bliss which it hath not entered into the heart of man to imagine!—

"With what a bounding thrill
He'll feel the airs that never chill,
The strength that knows not years!
No cloud in all the Heaven's sweet blue;
No more of doubt, where all is true;
Nor death to close the longing view;
No dream of future tears!

"The way is passed, and he can stand,
As if on Jordan's farther strand;
As if, the palm-branch in his hand,
The chaplet on his brow,
A wanderer resting at his home,
A pilgrim at the holy dome,
To Zion's mountain he has come—
Eternity is *now!*"

[1] The late Bishop (Burgess) of Maine.

THE END.

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